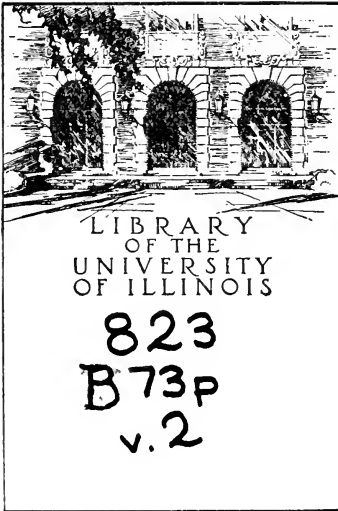


Ann Wiseman

1830



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THE
PROTESTANT;
A TALE OF
THE REIGN OF QUEEN MARY
BY THE
AUTHOR OF 'DE FOIX,' 'THE WHITE HOODS,' &c.
IN THREE VOLUMES.

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THE PROTESTANT.

CHAPTER I.

SINCE the late interview with Edward Wilford, Sir Richard Southwell, to whom we must now return, had been much disturbed in mind. His fondness for his daughter, the dread he entertained lest the claim that Edward still made upon her, and her affection for him, should hereafter lead her to become the wife of a heretic, allowed him no rest. And even in the midst of these tormenting reflections, he could not think upon Owen Wilford, the father of Edward, now suffering in prison, accused of heresy, and liable to the severest penalty of the law,

without a degree of sorrow and of pity, that was not the least of his anxieties.

Sir Richard was now seated before a table, upon which lay several books, writing materials, &c. ; yet so little did he appear to be occupied with his ordinary pursuits, that he sat leaning his head upon his hand, apparently lost in thought; when the door of the chamber was softly opened, and Friar John stood before him. “I have been anxiously expecting you, Father,” said Sir Richard; “for I need your counsel.”

“I am come to yield it,” replied the Friar; “and I guess upon what subject you would require my counsel—your daughter.”

“Yes,” said Sir Richard; “her happiness is dearer to me than my existence; and what has so lately happened has awakened my worst fears. Edward Wilford has renewed that claim, which the favour and the weakness of my poor wife allowed him to make upon Arabella when I was in a foreign land.”

“ It appears to me,” answered the Friar, “ a most extraordinary, I will not say sinful, act in Lady Southwell, that she should have encouraged, and have actually allowed, a contract to pass between her daughter and this young man, without previously gaining your sanction.”

“ It was so indeed,” replied Sir Richard; “ yet thus much even I will say in mitigation of what she did :—Lady Southwell knew of the warm friendship that once subsisted between this young man’s father and myself; she knew also how much I was bound to him, even by the strongest ties by which one man can be bound to another; she knew there was a time when I prized Owen Wilford beyond all other men on earth, and, but for the difference of our faith, that I held him as a brother. On this account, therefore, in the first instance, she thought I should rejoice to see our children united, and, when circumstances arose to make her believe that my consent would be wanting, the affections of these young people were so far

engaged, that she had not courage sufficient to put an end to a connexion that she had sanctioned in its bud, and she still hoped that my friendship for the father would induce me to relent."

"And how came you, Sir Richard," said the Friar, in a tone of considerable authority, "to form so strict a union with a man who was an enemy to your faith?"

"There you are in error, Father," replied Southwell; "Owen Wilford was not always what he is now. He was born and educated in the true faith. When our friendship first arose, he was a Roman Catholic; something lax in his opinions, I grant, but still within the pale of the true Church. Some years after, he was corrupted, in Germany, by Luther's accursed doctrines; and there Cranmer took him into his service. I was absent in foreign Courts when Cranmer fixed him here; and then began this miserable connexion between our children. You know what followed; I need not repeat it here."

“ I do,” said the Friar; “ but does your daughter not believe herself freed from that contract, into which she so hastily entered, by its having been annulled by the Legate of the Pope?”

“ I thought, I hoped she did,” replied Sir Richard; “ but you were present when, but two days since, you heard the conversation that passed between me and Edward Wilford. He declares himself still resolved to claim Arabella; and I fear the worst, for I know my child has in her character much of the mild virtues, but also much of the weakness, of her mother.”

“ And have you conferred with your daughter on this unhappy affair, since the morning that she met Edward Wilford in the Park?” inquired the Friar. “ Have you questioned her on the subject?”

Sir Richard Southwell looked confused; and turning to his Father Confessor with an air of deep humiliation, as if he obliged himself to state a truth that it was painful to reveal, he said, “ No, Father, I have not. I have feared

to meet her, since I know what I *must* say ; I know the pain that I must give to the heart of my child, and I have not yet summoned fortitude sufficient to do it."

" So !" replied John, " to save her a momentary suffering, you would expose her to that suffering which has no end. This is parental love of an extraordinary kind !"

" Spare me all reproaches, I beseech you," said Sir Richard. " I will, indeed—I will endeavour to be a man. Counsel me how to act ; but spare, I entreat you, the feelings of a father."

" I must not—I dare not do so," replied Friar John. " I must not suffer the wound to fester for the want of the probe, lest death ensue. I will not here repeat the past,—you know it all. Believe me, you must act with resolution. There is but one way to save Arabella ; for, so long as Wilford lives, and she is free, he will never renounce her."

" What must I do ?" inquired Sir Richard, with much agitation.

“Marry her to another,” answered Friar John, “and she is safe: there is no other way to save her from destruction. The Queen has earnestly recommended to you Sir Francis Morgan. She has promised to take the charge of his fortunes herself. He is of an ancient and an honourable house; and, besides, you have in some measure pledged yourself to him.”

“Not unless my child consented,” said Sir Richard. “If her consent can be obtained, I grant that I have pledged myself to Sir Francis Morgan, and that by your advice, Father. For though I admit the truth of all that you assert, yet Morgan is not altogether the man I would have chosen for Arabella.”

“I saw the necessity that such a barrier should exist between your daughter and Edward Wilford as would destroy his hopes of her for ever,” replied the Friar; “and therefore I prevailed with you to accept him. You have sufficiently indulged the Lady Arabella, by hitherto allowing her to reject every suit. The

regard I feel for you, my concern for the welfare of your house, my duty as the spiritual director of your family, and, above all, the deep desire which I feel to save her soul from corruption,—all bid me urge you to act as a man, as a follower of the true faith.”

“ I will endeavour to overcome this weakness,” said Sir Richard Southwell,—“ I will see my child : but how can I bear to render her unhappy ?”

“ You must bear it, unless you strive to prevent the ruin that will make her so,” said the Friar. “ Would you give your child to the wolf ? Would you suffer a creature, so dear to you, to be lost in body and in soul for ever ?”

“ No ! no ! I will not !” exclaimed Sir Richard. “ I will act this hour. I beseech you, Father, leave me, and send Arabella hither. I will give you a good account of our meeting. I will obey you.”

“ I expect it,” replied the Friar, somewhat

haughtily. “For remember what you have to fear, and to whom you must render your account.” He bowed and retired.

Not long after, Arabella entered the room. She ran towards her father, and, following the dutiful custom of the period, threw herself at his feet, to beg his blessing on seeing him for the first time that day. Sir Richard looked with so much tenderness upon her, that he could scarcely find it in his heart to distress her. Arabella was a lovely girl. Her form was fashioned in a mould of the most exact symmetry; and the extreme regularity of her features, and the delicacy of her complexion, were rendered yet more beautiful by the mild and amiable expression of countenance, that gave an interest to all she said or did. She was naturally graceful; and, possessing every accomplishment, which usually adorned the daughters of the higher orders of society at this period, a more lovely or engaging young person could scarcely be imagined.

Sir Richard Southwell bestowed upon his daughter the benediction she solicited ; and, before he withdrew his hand from her head, he stroked down the beautiful pale-brown locks, that hung profusely about her forehead and neck, and, looking stedfastly upon her, he said, “ My dearest heart, how much you remind me of your poor mother.”

Arabella looked up ; a tear was in her father’s eye as he spoke. “ And yet,” he added, “ you, my child, were the cause of the only disagreement that ever passed between us.”

“ You shall not speak of it now, my dearest father,” said Arabella : “ I see you are in a sad mood. What shall I do to pleasure you ?”

“ Be dutiful, my child !” continued Sir Richard. “ That is the greatest pleasure you can afford me.”

“ I hope that I shall never lack duty to you, Sir,” replied Arabella ; “ but let me endeavour to dispel this gloom that hangs upon you. What shall I do to divert you ? shall I read to

you one of your favourite books?" and, as she spoke, she took up a volume from the table.

"No," said Sir Richard; "I am too much disturbed now to listen with attention."

"I will not read then," answered Arabella; "but do let me strive to divert you, my dear father, and to chase away this moody cloud that hangs upon your brow. I will try the power of music. You loved once to hear me play on the virginals, as I sang to you one of your favourite airs. Music, even wise men say, can calm our disturbed passions; and whilst it thrills in the ear, it finds its echo in the heart, and awakens a corresponding harmony. I will endeavour to prove the truth of this assertion, and to chase hence the witch Melancholy by the simple spell of an old English air."

"Sir Richard smiled affectionately upon his daughter; and Arabella, seating herself before her instrument, touched the keys of the virginals with a light finger, as she sang the following words:—

You birds, that raise your little throats,
With songs to greet the new-born year,
How pleasant sound your warbling notes,
How gay your plumage doth appear,
When, crown'd with flowers, the Spring is near !

You crimson rose, from yonder spray,
Whose breath revives faint Summer's noon,
How sweet your opening buds by day,
Or closed by eve's soft dew, that soon
Shall steal fresh beauties from the moon !

You clustering vines, that twine around
The trellis of my straw-roof'd shed,
How rich with you is Autumn crown'd,
When golden sheaves their treasures spread,
And ripen'd fruits blush deep and red !

You welcome holly, green and glad,
With your full berries sparkling bright,
When Winter comes all dark and sad,
You cheer the grove through day's cold light,
And deck our Christmas halls by night,

Flowers, berries, fruits, from Nature's hand,
In Summer, Autumn, Winter, Spring,
Ye all are sent to bless the land,
And seasons ever changing bring,
The bounties of your Heavenly King.

Whilst Arabella was singing, Sir Richard hung over her at her instrument with all the tenderness of the fondest father ; and a father's pride swelled his bosom as he listened to the music of her voice. The feeling manner in which she sung, the expression of her countenance, and the taste with which she touched her virginals, so delighted him, that no sooner had she finished the air, and rose from her seat, than, throwing his arms about his daughter's neck, Sir Richard kissed her and exclaimed, " How can I bear the thought, that perfections such as these should be for ever cast away ! Oh, Arabella, you do not know with what anxious thoughts I ponder upon what may be your fate when I am in my grave. A father's care looks beyond the present hour, and would secure the happiness of its object when he shall be no more."

Arabella sighed deeply, for she guessed to what subject he was pointing, and, without giving him any answer, she only pressed her

father's hand as she held it, and cast her eyes upon the ground.

“Arabella,” continued Sir Richard, “your song has failed in the effect you desired it should produce upon me. My heart can find no ease till it has unburthened its cares to you. There *is* a subject upon which we must both understand each other. I will not be harsh, I will not upbraid you, but I must speak plainly ; you have seen Edward Wilford ?”

“I have,” replied his daughter, and her eyes were still bent upon the ground.

“He has himself told me what passed at that interview,” continued Sir Richard. “My child, I am not governed, as many parents are, by worldly motives. My desire is to preserve your happiness in a better world, as well as in this. You and Edward Wilford never, never, can be one. My child and the child of perdition never must unite in the sacrament of marriage. I am an old man, and the thought that possibly after my death you might become his, would disturb my last hour. I would see

you married, the wife of a man of an honourable estate, and of the true faith; and then, Arabella, your father will gladly bless you, and breathe out his last sigh upon your bosom; for the greatest care he has in this world will then be at rest."

"My father," replied Arabella, "I have never dissembled. I have no purpose to act rashly or contrary to your desires; but, I beseech you, do not force me to wed where I have no affection. Let me rest as I am, and I will live for you. I will be, as my mother was to you, a friend, a comforter; I will do my best to take care of you in your declining years. If you need diversion, I will sing to you, and become, too, the companion of your more serious occupations. And I will pray to God to lengthen your days, and to render their close calm and full of hope. Why should you wish to part with me?"

"I do not," said Sir Richard; "I do not mean to part with you—that is, I do not wish to part with you. But there are circum-

stances that render it prudent, nay necessary, that you should change your state. I have, hitherto, indulged you more than any other father would a child. All your suitors have been rejected ; but there is one—you know whom I mean—that her Grace, the Queen, has strongly recommended to me ; and I am, in some measure, pledged to him. Will you consent to admit his claim ?”

Arabella looked surprised ; for Sir Richard Southwell, though he had often spoken of Sir Francis Morgan’s suit, had never before ventured so directly to press it upon Arabella. “ My father,” she said, “ you told me, but just now, that I reminded you of my mother ; if I do so, let me beseech you to recall with her resemblance the recollection of her dying request to you ;—that no force should be used upon my will ; and that, if I ever renounced the fulfilment of a sacred engagement, which had been sanctioned by herself, it should be solely in consequence of my own determination to that effect. This *you*

promised to observe, so long as I continued to carry on no connexion, without your knowledge, with one unfortunate being. I have never broken my faith in this; for I do most solemnly assure you, that the meeting with Edward Wilford in the Park was purely accidental, both on his part and on mine. Forgive me, therefore, if I now say, that so long as I observe my promise, I hope you will not forget that which you made to my poor mother."

"I do not desire to forget it," replied Sir Richard; "I wish to lead, not to force your will. My anxiety to save you from the worst peril that could encompass my child, is assisted by one far more capable than I am of knowing what is best for you. I do not act without counsel."

"And why should you, Sir," said Arabella, "seek the counsel of any one to direct your will towards me? Follow the dictates of your own kind and generous heart, and do not give up your own authority as a father, or my

reliance upon your goodness as a child, to the cunning or the malice of a tyrannical priest. I am sure it is Friar John who thus sets you upon the wish to render me miserable.”

“ Silence, daughter !” replied Sir Richard ; “ I will not hear a man whom I think so excellent in judgment, and consider it a blessing to have near me, thus reviled. The Queen herself deems Friar John as one of the most able men in her cause ; and, in a great measure, attributes to his exertions the happy prospect of once more establishing the true faith in these realms.”

“ Yes ; but by what means has he helped to do it ?” exclaimed Arabella. “ Good God ! when I think upon the blood that has been spilt ; upon the numbers of those misguided, but still innocent victims, that are daily dragged to the stake, and by *this* man’s interference, I cannot see him without shuddering. Father, I am of the Roman Church as well as you are ; but——”

“ Holy Virgin ! accept my thanks for that

comfort," exclaimed Sir Richard; and he made the sign of the cross as he spoke.

"But if," continued Arabella, "I could believe, that to be such, demanded of me the shedding the blood of these innocent people, I would renounce my faith; though, from doing so, I should perish with them at the stake."

Sir Richard stood amazed at hearing these words; he was silent for a moment from mere surprise. "What do you mean, Arabella?" said he; "surely Wilford has not already poisoned that young mind with his accursed doctrines?"

"I mean nothing but what I say," replied his daughter; "I would have all men free in conscience."

"Why, that is like the dangerous doctrines of these Reformers," said Sir Richard; "they artfully begin with that. Do you think me, then, cruel, Arabella, because I look silently on, and see these things acted before my eyes? Alas, my child! you know not the mysterious,

the awful, the terrible will of God ;—a heretic is worse even than fiends themselves in His sight, since they leave His established Truth, they spurn His vicar here on earth, and do it under a pretext of perfect sanctity, on the assumption of a purer light than that by which even the saints of our holy Church are guided.”

“ That is Friar John’s doctrine,” answered Arabella ; “ and, whilst you declare it, your own heart, I am sure, renounces the barbarity that it enjoins ; you could never plunge your hands in the blood of innocent men, as that Friar does, daily ?”

“ I am not a chosen vessel to pour out the wrath of God upon these rebellious people,” said Sir Richard ; “ I have not strength of mind sufficient to defy myself my nature, to overcome the weakness of the flesh, as that man does, who, for the glory of his great Master’s name, can do violence to every human feeling, can war against them all, and can forget he is a man, to hold the strife of Heaven. Yet I can

see the necessity of such acts, and I can revere the strength of a courage that I could not imitate."

"Here is a book," said Arabella, as she again took up the volume she had before noticed from the table, "that you once were apt to commend. It is the Utopia of your deceased friend, Sir 'Thomas More."

"And what of that?" inquired Sir Richard Southwell.

"Sir 'Thomas says in this book," replied Arabella, "that in Utopia, freedom of conscience is allowed; and there men punish not for conscience' sake."

"The work is an imaginary one," said Sir Richard, "and so are many of the opinions it contains."

"Still it is looked upon as an excellent pattern for a state," replied Arabella; "and I cannot help thinking, that, had Sir Thomas More in after life but adhered to this rule, which he declared, in his early days, to be

current in Utopia, he would have been a better and a happier man."

"Sir Thomas, however, thought more wisely before his death," said Sir Richard; "for no man was more bitter against heretics than himself. He did not spare them."

"He was as much, then, the slave of his mistaken zeal in this instance," replied Arabella, "as he was made the slave, or rather the victim, of the tyranny of his enemies.—Sir Thomas died for conscience himself; such a spirit should have taught him to respect the truth of conscience in others."

"He fell a sacrifice, indeed, to tyranny," said Sir Richard; "but what has Sir Thomas More's memory to do with the subject of our discourse?—Will you see Sir Francis Morgan? I ask you only to see him, to admit him as your suitor."

"What I have said of Sir Thomas More," replied Arabella, "is not foreign to my purpose, since I would make it but a prelude to a prayer

I must address to you, to aid one who is also the victim of truth. Your ancient friend, the venerable, the good Owen Wilford, I have but lately learned, is to take his trial before the Spiritual Court for the sake of his faith. And I think that even you, my father, will admit, that Sir Thomas More was not a better or a wiser man than Wilford; though his virtues were more known, because they were exercised in public, yet both alike respected conscience."

"Alas! my child, what can I do for Wilford?" said Sir Richard; "my heart, my very soul bleeds with agony, when I but think of that man. But have I the power of a God to dispel the darkness that hides from him the truth? If I cannot do this, how can I serve him?"

"I do not know by what means you may serve him," said Arabella, "but I know you have much power; and having it, though Owen Wilford were a heathen, had he worshipped even the deaf gods of a Pagan idolatry, still you are bound to serve him. Will

you, my father, reflect upon my words, and promise me to think upon some means to benefit him ?”

“ I have thought upon it already,” replied Sir Richard, “ and I will serve him, if my influence can avail with those who have the power over him. But if I do thus much, will you promise to comply with my desires ? Will you receive Sir Francis Morgan ? It is all I ask of you. I will trust to time, to future circumstances, for your ultimate obedience, so you will but receive him.”

“ If *you* command me to receive Sir Francis in your house, my father,” said Arabella, “ I have no right, as your child, to refuse compliance ; but beyond this, I neither can, nor will, pledge myself for obedience. Friar John shall not so far prevail with me, however he may dictate to you.”

“ Dictate to me, Arabella ! he does not dictate to me ; he but counsels me for your happiness, and for my own ; and as he is my spiri-

tual director, I must not turn a deaf ear to his persuasions. But of one thing I warn you,—do not trust too much to my indulgence. I have hitherto left you to your own guidance, more, perhaps, than it was for your benefit I should have done. Yet there is one point in which I will be obeyed, so prepare your mind to meet it. If I once learn that you either encourage or receive Edward Wilford, without my knowledge, all forbearance on my part is for ever at an end. Sir Francis Morgan will be here to-day, and I look to your duty to receive him as my friend.”

“As your friend I will assuredly receive him,” said Arabella.

“And I trust,” continued Southwell, “that you will let him hope for something more than your own friendship.”

Sir Richard Southwell, when he commenced these last instructions to his daughter, was standing near the window, and, as he observed Friar John crossing the path that led to the

house, the very sight of that awful priest, who had managed so completely to overrule Sir Richard's mind, seemed to inspire him with courage to address his daughter in a sterner manner than he had ever yet done on the subject of Sir Francis Morgan's suit. He soon after left Arabella, and went to render an account of his interview with her to his tyrannical confessor.

When Arabella was left to herself, she sunk down upon the chair that stood before the virginals, and burst into tears. In the late interview with her father, she had spoken more boldly to him than she had ever yet ventured to do in all her life. But she now felt her heart sink within her at the prospect before her view ; and bold as she could sometimes be in words, firmness of purpose was never a characteristic of Arabella's mind ; so that, what with weakness of disposition, and wavering of action, she was just that sort of person, who, in one of such uncertain moments, might be led to do some act that would cost her the happiness of her future life.

She had first connected herself with Edward Wilford, because her mother's approval had seconded her own affection. She had afterwards renounced him, because it was her father's will that she should do so ; yet she held herself bound to him, because her faith was plighted ; and, nevertheless, she had just consented to receive Sir Francis Morgan, while, at the same time, she made up her mind positively to reject him ; and, to crown the inconsistency of her purposes, she determined never more to see Edward Wilford, but still to consider herself as under the most sacred of all engagements to him, unless he should himself release her from it,—(a thing she sometimes thought it would be her duty to desire him to do,)—yet she was fully aware he would never consent to do it, without her demand of such a release could be accompanied with the assurance that she no longer regarded him. Such was the contradictory and wavering state of poor Arabella's mind, when she prepared to meet Sir Francis Morgan.

CHAPTER II.

WHEN Arabella was led into the chamber by her father, where Sir Francis Morgan attended to receive this introduction, the extreme beauty of her person, arrayed in a suit of white and green satin, richly adorned with jewels, forcibly struck the admiration of the gay young man, who, for a moment, felt really surprised and overpowered by the modest beauty of Sir Richard's daughter. Morgan was without principles. He had been extravagant, yet he was not devoid of all feeling; and though an indifference to the wealth and rank of Arabella had no share in his pursuit of her, yet he really loved her,—that is, as far as such a selfish being, the slave of every new passion, could be said to

love ; for, of that pure and generous affection, which prefers the happiness of its object to every other thing, Morgan had not the most distant idea. His opinions, also, of women had been formed between the French Court and the Court of Queen Mary. He considered women, therefore, either as light and coquetish, or as gloomy and morose ; and generally finding that those of the latter class were often remarkable for nothing so much as stern manners and a forbidding exterior, he was much disposed to rank the lovely Arabella as nearer akin to the French than to the English Court-ladies.

The reader has hitherto only seen Sir Francis Morgan with his low-bred and dissolute companion, Samuel Collins, or with the well-fed and artful instrument of his villany, Lawyer Cluny. But if he should conclude, from such an association, that Morgan *could* not be a gentleman, (at least in manners,) he is much mistaken. Morgan, like many other young men of birth and education, who give themselves up to

profligacy, had engaged with companions who had nothing but their vices to recommend them, and whom he internally despised whilst he constituted himself of their number. Proud of such an associate, they had yielded to him a supremacy amongst them, an obedience which Morgan could not hope to exact from his equals; and he loved to be the head, though of the worst company, and, in return for such an election of himself, he sunk his manners with his society; so that Sir Francis Morgan, who was considered the pattern of an English gallant, whilst he visited the Court of France, in an English tavern, bear-garden, bull-yard, or cock-pit, might be seen to rival with success the vulgarity of the professed sharpers and gamblers, whose language would need a glossary to any but themselves or the initiated few.

Sir Richard Southwell knew but little of Morgan's real character, as he had only returned to England after Mary's accession to the crown. And however much the young man

might have indulged an evil disposition, since he had received the honour of knighthood from the Queen, and had aspired to the hand of Arabella, he had given up the more public haunts of iniquity, and had only indulged himself, like many of the Court, in private vices at his leisure, laying the whole weight of his apparent change of character to the account of a change of faith; for Morgan was a consummate hypocrite.

Friar John, it was said, had busied himself in the law affairs of this young man's father, Judge Morgan, assisting that learned dispenser of justice by expounding to him in what manner (in certain trials and cases) he ought to understand the law of the land to make it compatible with the law of Queen Mary. Judge Morgan had proved a docile pupil, and particularly in the case of the lamented Lady Jane Dudley, whose sentence of death he had pronounced, and, in requital for these good services, the Friar had promised to become a

warm friend to his son, especially by using his influence with Sir Richard Southwell to gain his sanction that Sir Francis should attempt to win Arabella.

Knowing, therefore, but little of Morgan's former life; receiving in his favour the recommendation of the Queen, with such an advocate as Friar John to gloss over his vices and to describe his virtues, it is not so much to be wondered at, that Sir Richard Southwell looked upon him in a manner very different to that of his real deserts. And it was not without a feeling of peculiar anxiety that Sir Richard now watched the countenance of Arabella, in the hope to observe some favourable mark of pleasure on her reception of a suitor so much desired by himself for her acceptance.

Sir Francis was carefully and elegantly attired, in a style that his own vanity assured him could not fail to render him agreeable in the eyes of a woman; and he knew, also, that his person, which really had some claims to

manly beauty, could not be held as an obstacle to his wishes, had he been the suitor of most ladies of his day.

Arabella received Sir Francis in a confused and agitated manner, which Morgan's vanity interpreted favourably to himself; considering it the emotion of a bashful girl, who had been bred up in the country, upon first receiving a professed suitor, whose person and whose finished address inspired her with a feeling of his superiority. But Sir Richard, who knew the state of Arabella's mind, augured less favourably from it; and, desirous to give his daughter time to recover herself, he entered into conversation with Morgan on many of the leading topics of the day.

Morgan had quick parts; he had travelled, and had gone through the discipline of a court: no wonder, therefore, that, Proteus-like, he could assume the form most in unison with existing circumstances. A court, also, had taught him to assume a virtue when he had it

not ; and, now that he was in the presence of Sir Richard Southwell, he conducted himself with that modesty, so becoming in a young man when he converses with his superior in age and station. It is true, the dissipated manner in which he had passed the best years of his life, had not rendered him very competent in those accomplishments that are the result of studious application ; but he had been a keen and a lively observer of passing objects—of men and things : and he had also acquired that pleasing manner of saying something agreeable, even upon the lightest subject of discourse, which, with the world, procured for him the reputation of a general intelligence ; so that, without such intelligence being founded on the basis of solidity, he often bore away the palm in society from those of his own age and condition, who really possessed ten times more knowledge than himself, but without having, in an equal degree, the art to turn it to account.

When people are pleased with the manners

of a companion, they are seldom critically nice in inquiring into the cause; and if such a companion can please, without completely throwing the rest into the back-ground, he is sure to be viewed with indulgence, and is often preferred to the learned and the wise, who may be wanting in qualities so generally acceptable to the self-love of others. Sir Richard Southwell, perhaps, without being conscious of it, was pleased with Morgan something in this way; and, drawing in his own mind a contrast between the conciliating and pleasing manners of Sir Francis, and the impetuous and somewhat haughty temper of Edward Wilford—(a temper too honest to hide even its own failings),—he could not but rejoice, for Arabella's sake, that the opinion of Friar John, the recommendation of the Queen, and, above all, the religion of Sir Francis, rendered him a more proper person for his son-in-law than Edward could have been, under any circumstances.

Another motive, also, assisted Morgan in

gaining Sir Richard's good opinion, and that motive rested in the feelings of a father, since he wished to find the man he had selected for his daughter really worthy of her. He had gone too far under Friar John's directions to recede with honour, and his wishes now stepped in to conciliate his prejudices; so that he studiously sought to find every favourable point that might appear in Morgan's mind or manners; and Sir Francis (already tutored by Friar John, as to what line of conduct would become most agreeable to Sir Richard,) was fully prepared to meet his expectations.

The Friar had now joined the party, and attended them into the dining apartment of Wellminster Hall, where he bestowed the Latin benediction upon the meats, and to this solemn preparation Morgan appeared to listen with the most decorous attention. The circumstance was trifling in itself, yet it was too important to be passed unnoticed by a man like Sir Richard Southwell, who, although one of

the most priest-ridden bigots of the age in which he lived, was sincere in his professions of piety. He wanted but a better faith to become an example of all that is worthy of the most unfeigned trust in Providence.

After dinner was concluded, amongst other topics of discourse, the spiritual assembly about to be held in Canterbury, under the Queen's commission, was named. Arabella, who had hitherto scarcely attended to the subject of conversation, now listened with deep interest. This topic had been artfully, nay purposely, introduced by Friar John ; and, as he mentioned Owen Wilford as the chief person who was to be tried for heresy, a deadly paleness overspread the countenance of Arabella.

Sir Francis Morgan, on hearing Owen Wilford named by the Friar, gave a gentle sigh, and shook his head with so well-acted a grace, as if he had been a finished performer of stage-plays ; and he said, with much apparent feeling,

“ I cannot bear to think of the approaching trial of Owen Wilford,—it fills me with a mingled feeling of pity and of regret. He is the husband of my maternal aunt, poor Dame Alice ; and it grieves me to remember that a man should have taken upon him holy orders, when unfitted for the office by having a wife. As a near relative also, I cannot but feel an interest in his cause ; and yet, I fear that I may myself be called upon as a witness against him, since I once heard him preach the most detested doctrines in his church of Wellminster. I hope I may not be called upon ; but if I am, I must not hesitate between private affection and the public duty that I owe to the true faith, and to my own conscience.”

“ I am glad to hear you say so,” replied Sir Richard ; “ since such a sacrifice to truth, as that of our dearest feelings, is what God demands, and what his vicar here on earth enjoins. Yet, I know the task is painful to act from conscience in opposition to feeling ;” and as he spoke, Sir Richard looked with a pecu-

liar expression of tender anxiety upon his daughter.

Arabella, in a timid manner, here ventured to speak, though but a few sentences, to Sir Francis Morgan. "I cannot think," she said, "that your conscience need oblige you to appear at all in the court against your kinsman: England is large enough,—you might leave Kent till the trial is over."

Sir Richard saw the unfavourable turn the conversation was likely to take, and that it had already become really painful to his daughter's feelings. Desirous, therefore, of changing it, he struck upon the first topic that occurred to his thoughts, and asked Friar John, if he could tell whether the Letter of Remonstrance, that had been sent by his Holiness of Rome to the Queen's sister, the Princess Elizabeth, was likely or not to produce any effect in leading her back to the true faith.*

* The letter from the Pope to Elizabeth, here alluded to by Sir Richard Southwell, is given at large by Fuller, in his Church History.

Friar John shook his head. "I fear not," said he; "though it is difficult to pronounce an opinion, for the Princess Elizabeth is very subtle. She suffers the Mass to be read before her, though I never yet heard that she openly assented to it; and Feckman could make nothing of her reply to him upon the actual presence in the Sacrament."

"I have heard," continued Sir Richard, "that the Count of Feria endeavoured to procure her excommunication from his Holiness Paul the Fourth of Rome."

"He did so," replied Friar John; "but his Holiness, in his great goodness, would not consent to do it, but rather preferred to address letters of remonstrance to the Princess Elizabeth, through the hands of Vincent Parpalia, the Abbot of St. Saviour."

"I trust that the Princess will conform to his Holiness's desires," said Sir Richard, "otherwise it may hereafter be grievous to these realms. And surely Elizabeth has suffered sufficient to learn humility."

“She bore her imprisonment in the Tower of London, and her confinement at Woodstock, with a stout heart,” replied John; “in the latter place addicting her mind solely to study, and admitting no political discourse, nor any overtures whatever to be held out to her, without the sanction of her gracious sister.”

“The Princess has been wonderfully spared,” said Sir Richard; “for, suspected as she has been, and a known favourer of the Reformers, there are persons who thought (though I was never of their number) that her removal would have been but a necessary act to preserve the faith once more so happily established in England.”

“It may seem harsh to hold by such an opinion,” replied the Friar; “but it appears to many necessary, and it was perhaps the only act of weakness that ever King Philip committed, to persuade his royal consort to spare Elizabeth, and to give her freedom. But Philip is a man of many virtues—of great clemency.”

“ Pardon me, Father,” said Sir Francis Morgan, addressing the Friar, “ if I venture to differ from you in opinion on this point. I rather think his Grace, King Philip, was to be commended ; and that sparing the Princess Elizabeth was, on his part, an act of the most excellent state policy ; since, should our present sovereign, Mary, (which Heaven avert,) die without issue, if Elizabeth were no more, the crown of England would revert to the brows of the beauteous Queen of Scots, whose late marriage with the Dauphin of France would render England the firm ally of the French people, to the manifest injury of Philip’s father, the Emperor Charles the Fifth, and wholly against the interests of Spain.”

“ You are quite right, Sir Francis,” said Sir Richard, “ and you have placed this circumstance in a clear point of view. But, in all respects, I rejoice that the Princess Elizabeth is spared, though her existence has been the cause of many treasonable factions. And I

shall always think that Sir Thomas Wyatt's rebellion was not merely to put aside the Spanish match of Queen Mary. There must have been some other motive for his conduct, though I wholly acquit the Princess Elizabeth from being a sharer in his treasonable practices."

"I have very particular reasons for thinking so myself," said Sir Francis Morgan, in a mysterious manner: "I think, that to place Elizabeth on the throne, and to cast down Mary, was really the end that Wyatt proposed to himself in his ill-fated attempt at insurrection; since, I grieve to say it, but I fear some of my *own* connexions had promised to join him, on the hope of such an issue."

"Indeed!" exclaimed Sir Richard, "I am astonished. Surely, you cannot mean the Wilford family? Owen has ever preached obedience to the existing authorities; that I will say for him. And as to Edward Wilford—"

"He left England exactly at the time Sir

Thomas Wyatt failed, and was committed to the Tower," observed Friar John.

"Why, so he did," exclaimed Sir Richard Southwell; "but surely that failure on the part of Wyatt could not have been a motive for his sudden retreat. I thought it arose from a very different cause of disappointment;" and he looked with a scrutinizing eye upon his daughter as he spoke. "I must beg of you, Sir Francis Morgan, to be more explicit."

"Pardon me," said Morgan; "you led to a subject of discourse that drew from me at the moment an unguarded expression. In short, I let fall what perhaps had better not to have been named. Allow me to be silent; for, remember, my situation is one of peculiar delicacy, considering how nearly I am related to Edward Wilford himself. But—but, I did not mean particularly to name Edward Wilford, when speaking of Sir Thomas Wyatt's rebellion; since, as I before said, I stand nearly related to him, and—"

"And he stands before you in the heirship

to the Mordaunt estates," said Arabella. "I think indeed, Sir Francis, you had better be silent for your own sake, since men might say that you had an interest in circulating suspicions and reports that might affect even his life."

Sir Richard looked displeased at hearing these remarks, somewhat severely given, from Arabella, and he said, "I never yet thought Edward Wilford had connected himself with a man like Sir Thomas Wyatt. If he did so, he must be base indeed, as I have always heard him exclaim against rebellion and civil strife."

"I am sure, Edward Wilford is no traitor," said Arabella with considerable warmth; "I will answer thus much for him, though I have not the plea of a blood relative, as Sir Francis Morgan might have, to make it my duty to vindicate his fame."

"The first duty of every man is to speak the truth," said Friar John, "since that constitutes our relationship to Heaven."

"It does so," said Arabella, "and charity is the very soul of truth; it disdains all suspicion,

all half-spoken, half-insinuated whispers of malignity.”

Sir Richard Southwell seemed greatly disturbed. He was anxious that Morgan should appear in the most favourable light to his daughter, and he saw that the conversation which had just passed was likely to injure him in her opinion. He said, therefore—“Sir Francis, my daughter knows little of the world, and she thinks that relatives, in our times, should be to each other like the brothers in arms of the old chivalry, and take up the gauntlet in defence of their friends, even upon the slightest occasion. Pray, therefore, satisfy her, and at once declare the innocence of this young man, who is your cousin, if you really feel assured of it.”

“I am sorry that you touch me so nearly, Sir Richard,” replied Morgan; “I can have no cause to desire to injure Edward Wilford; let us, therefore, say no more about the matter; suffer me to remain silent, since one unguarded

expression has led to all this unpleasant discourse."

"You cannot vindicate Edward Wilford, then?" said Sir Richard; "you will not speak of him?"

"Rest assured," answered Morgan, "that if I could speak any good of him on this subject, I would do it willingly; and if I cannot, it is better for his sake to remain silent."

"You are generous, young man, very generous," said Sir Richard, "and I find that I have been greatly deceived. But I thank God that it is no worse. I will not press upon you any questions respecting a man to whom it is your misfortune to be related in blood."

"You do right, Sir Richard," said the Friar, "to spare Sir Francis Morgan's feelings on this point; and I think his delicacy is quite in character with the chivalrous ideas of honour you mentioned but now."

Sir Richard Southwell seemed for a time quite absorbed by the train of thought to which

this discourse had given birth, and more than ever did he rejoice that Arabella had escaped such a man as Edward Wilford ; while Morgan's affected reluctance to accuse his relative appeared to the prejudiced mind of Sir Richard as the act of an over-generous temper, fearful of injuring even an enemy, unless necessity demanded it.

Arabella still kept her seat. A deep feeling of interest seemed to fill her heart, and she could not conceal the indignation that Morgan's artful insinuations had raised in her mind ; since she scarcely deigned to reply to the conversation that he now addressed to her. At length, Sir Richard Southwell recollected that he had some letters of consequence, connected with his public duties, that obliged him to retire for a while to his closet ; and he proposed that, whilst he was thus engaged, Arabella and Friar John should conduct Sir Francis Morgan round the park and pleasure-grounds of Westminster Hall. Desiring, therefore, Morgan to

take the charge of his daughter in the walk, Sir Richard withdrew.

Arabella, as she accepted Morgan's arm, showed evidently, that she did it solely in obedience to her father's commands; and the little party now set forward on their walk. The conversation that passed was chiefly maintained between the Friar and Sir Francis, till the former, desirous to give his friend an opportunity of conciliating the disturbed feelings of Arabella, when they arrived near that part of the park which led to the village of Wellminster, pleaded that he had some business to transact in his new parish, and, begging Arabella and Sir Francis to keep near the spot where he parted from them, promised a speedy return, when he proposed they should all return in company to the Hall. Arabella, who never coveted the society of Friar John, nevertheless, at this moment, parted from him with reluctance, since she was still less disposed to remain alone with Sir Francis Morgan.

Sir Francis had now a difficult part to act. He was in company with Arabella, under the sanction of her father ; the Friar had given him opportunity, such as an allowed suitor would desire ; and his mistress, who dared not leave him for fear of displeasing her parent, was sitting quietly by his side, upon a bench under the old oak tree in the park ; yet in so disturbed a humour, with such severity in her looks, such coldness in her manner towards him, that even Morgan felt embarrassed, and he scarcely knew in what way to introduce his discourse. He was not acquainted with all the circumstances that had passed between Arabella and Edward Wilford ; still, Friar John had communicated as much of them as he thought it prudent to trust to the knowledge of Morgan. For though the Friar had taken care fully to acquaint himself with the affairs of Sir Francis, he had not been so entirely communicative in return, giving his confidence but partially ; since he well knew that people seldom keep the

secrets of their friends quite so well as they do their own. Morgan therefore merely knew that Edward Wilford had once been induced to aspire to the hand of Arabella, but that his open profession of the Reformed Faith had rendered all attempts, on his part, to obtain the sanction of Sir Richard fruitless. But as to a mutual affection or a contract ever having subsisted between his cousin and the lady, he was wholly ignorant of either. Still, he had remarked the warm manner in which Arabella had that day endeavoured to vindicate Edward's fame; and Morgan knew the human heart well enough to feel assured, that, before he could open his suit with any chance of success, he must first attempt to remove the cause of displeasure, that appeared to lurk in the bosom of his mistress.

He now, therefore, reverted to the subject; and, with an earnestness of manner that would have deceived any mind but one so prejudiced against him as Arabella's, declared that

he lamented having unthinkingly uttered what might be deemed injurious to his cousin, and was evidently displeasing to herself. Arabella received his apology with coldness, and only remarked, that as he was so nearly related to the unhappy family of Wilford, she thought he had better employ his mind in considering by what means he could assist the distressed Owen ; or, at least, to avoid doing them an injury, as he had hinted he might be summoned to appear as a witness on the ensuing trial.

“ Believe me,” replied Morgan, “ I would gladly serve them if I could but find the means, consistent with the law of our faith ; and, especially as it is your wish, since the happiness of my Arabella must ever be the first desire of my heart ;” and Sir Francis ventured so far as to seize her hand and to press it to his lips as he spoke.

Extremely offended at the term of *my Arabella*, Sir Richard’s daughter looked haughtily upon him, as she said with some spirit, “ Not

yours, Sir, yet ; for, whatever compliance you may have exacted from my father, you have yet obtained no sanction from me."

"I have obtained nothing but hope, I grant," replied Morgan ; who now thought she was about to play the coquet with him after the fashion of the French court ; for he never anticipated a serious objection on her part towards himself, after the encouragement of the Friar, and the sanction of the father had been obtained.

"But surely, fairest Arabella," he added, "since I have been received at your house as an avowed suitor, now to despair would be unworthy of you and of myself. I cannot suppose you would give me such a reception, such a cause for hope, without the intent to realise it. And did I not hope, having gained so far a footing, I should want both the feelings and the spirit of a man. And you could not consent to allow me the happiness I thus enjoy by your side, did you hold me as a rejected adorer of your beauties."

"I thank you, Sir Francis," replied Ara-

bella; “at least, you teach me how I ought to act. I will relieve you of my presence at this moment;” and, arising from her seat, she prepared to depart.

“Nay, you shall not go,—by Heaven! you shall not!” exclaimed Morgan; and, forgetful of the part he had but so lately resolved upon acting, he added, with the audacity that was natural to him, “I have your father’s sanction, and you shall hear me.”

“Shall!” exclaimed Arabella; “unhand me, Sir!—unhand me this instant! I insist upon returning to the house; you have no right to detain me.”

A slight struggle now ensued. Arabella continued to insist upon being suffered to return; and Sir Francis Morgan, to plead her father’s sanction and his own vehement passion as an excuse for her detention; when, in the midst of this expostulation, a third person suddenly darted upon him from out a winding path in the wood that opened near the spot where he held the

struggling Arabella. This person instantly interposed,—tore Morgan from the lady, and bid him draw and defend himself. Arabella screamed,—Sir Francis looked up, and hastily laid his hand upon his sword, as he exclaimed, “Edward Wilford! Nay, then it is time to think of my defence, if you are upon me.”

Arabella, distracted with her fears, now ran between them, and, scarcely knowing what she said, called aloud to Morgan,—“Oh, do not injure him!—for God’s sake, do not harm Edward!”

“Is it so?” said Sir Francis. “I see, then, what Edward Wilford is to you. This is no place for a brawl in the presence of a lady. But you know where to find me,” he continued, addressing Edward, “if you would hear farther from me. This lady is under my protection by the commands of her father. I shall now return with her to the house, and I desire you to let me pass.”

“You shall pass over my body first!” replied

Edward Wilford—and he drew his sword as he spoke;—then, going up to Arabella, he took her by the hand, and, turning to Morgan, added, “You shall not dare to touch her! She is mine, in the sight of God and man!”

“Yours!” said Sir Francis—and he added with a laugh, “Why, surely, Edward Wilford, you are not going to play a knight of King Arthur’s round-table, and to carry off a fair damsel by the valour of your sword. Sir Richard Southwell has accepted me as a suitor of his daughter.”

“Accepted thee!” exclaimed Edward; “he might as well accept a common dicer in the Marshalsea. But know from me, that Sir Richard has not the power to accept any one for this lady, since she is mine by a contract that exists between us—mine in affection,—mine by her own consent. Arabella, have I spoken truth? Bear me witness, and convince this man of his folly.”

“You have spoken the truth,” said Arabella.

“ Sir Francis, I am bound, under a solemn contract, to this gentleman.”

“ Then, why did you receive me to-day ?” said Morgan, as his cheek flushed and his eye expanded with passion. “ Your father, at our first meeting, told me, in your presence, in what light I was to be considered in your family.”

“ I received you but in obedience to my father,” replied Arabella, in great agitation ; “ but——”

“ And, in obedience to your father, I will not renounce my claim. In his name, Lady Arabella, I conjure you to return with me to the house.”

“ She shall not !” exclaimed Edward Wilford. “ I command you, Arabella, never more to hold intercourse with that man, unless *you* feel that I am discarded from your affections.”

“ You are a villain !” said Morgan.

“ Defend yourself !” cried Wilford.

“ Hold up your swords, for my sake ! for God’s sake !” said Arabella.

“ I repeat it !” cried Morgan, who now appeared half frantic with passion ; “ you are a villain and a traitor !”

“ It is a lie !” said Wilford ; “ and I will prove it such on the instant !” Edward now darted forward upon Morgan, who stood on his defence, and some passes ensued, as Arabella stood screaming for help.

Her cries brought help indeed ; for Friar John (who had met Sam Collins as he was coming to attend upon Sir Francis Morgan at the Hall) now ran up, and, with the assistance of Collins, parted the enraged combatants.

“ Why, what is this ?” said the Friar with surprise.

“ Nothing,” replied Morgan, “ but that this gentleman thought proper to insist upon it that a young lady who was in my company by her father’s orders, should leave me. And when he also thought proper to draw upon me and attempt my life, I could not but defend myself.”

“ You bleed,” said the Friar. “ Why, what madness is here ?” he continued, turning to Ed-

ward Wilford; "you have wounded your cousin."

"But slightly," said Sir Francis. "It is but a flesh-wound in the arm; but I owe no thanks to Master Edward Wilford that the sword had not passed through my body."

Samuel Collins heard this, and thinking himself perfectly secure by hearing the odds in his favour three to one, he now thought, therefore, he might as well show a little spirit; so, blustering up to Wilford, he said, with a most insolent air, "What, Sir! do you dare, Sir, to attack my friend, Sir! I will make you to know that edged tools are not to be played with, Sir. I will revenge my friend, and meet you in any way you please, Sir; and give you the odds, and beat you into the bargain, though you now crow louder than any bird of the game."

"Keep the language of the cock-pit for the ears of your friend, Sir," replied Edward, "or I shall know how to deal with you."

Collins, who mistook the cool contempt of

Edward Wilford for cowardice, grew more insolent. With his cap stuck on one side of his head, holding his arms a-kinbo, he came up close to Edward in a swaggering manner, and, looking him in the face, said, "What! you chicken-hearted fellow, you! you pretend to draw upon a gentleman, and dare not accept a fair offer; and when I told you that I would give you the odds into the bargain,—Curse me, if I don't think you would turn tail and run away as a cur does before a mastiff. Why, I would box such a fellow as you are for a grot, and beat you with as much ease as——"

"As I now send you to the devil," exclaimed Wilford; and seizing Collins by the collar, he shook him violently, and cast him off with so much strength, that Collins measured his full length upon the ground. This assault passed in a much shorter space of time than that occupied by repeating it; while Friar John was engaged in binding up Morgan's arm that bled fast, and Arabella sat upon the seat where she had sunk down almost fainting with alarm.

Samuel Collins once more got upon his legs, and failed not to use them to advantage; for, running off as hard as he could, he went instantly to the house in order to give the alarm, by stating that Edward Wilford had set upon Sir Francis Morgan in the wood with the intent to murder him, and that this intended murder had only been prevented by the valorous interposition of himself and Friar John.

No sooner was he gone than Arabella guessed his purpose, and vehemently implored Wilford to leave the scene of contention. Even Friar John, whose policy recommended him to play the part of moderator in the presence of Arabella, seconded this advice, though Wilford seemed loth to follow it. Morgan still held his sword in the hand of which he retained the use. "I shall not forget this," he said to Edward,—“I shall find a proper place and time to requite you.”

Edward, who did not comprehend to the full extent the meaning that Morgan annexed to these words, answered, “At your pleasure, Sir

Francis. I am often to be found amongst my father's old and faithful parishioners ; and if you desire a more particular address, I am lodged with an honest widow, whose name is Littlewit, in Canterbury. I shall expect to hear from you."

"And you shall hear from me, when you least expect it," replied Sir Francis.

"Arabella, farewell," continued Wilford. "May Heaven protect you ! Remember what you owe to me."

Wilford retired through the wood ; and soon after, Arabella was led back to the house by some of her father's servants, who had hastily run out on the first alarm spread by Collins.

Friar John was instantly closeted with Sir Richard Southwell. What then passed is not known ; but it should appear that the Friar had given his own account of the transaction in a way highly favourable to Morgan, since Sir Richard ordered that Sir Francis should remain in the house till the following day, on account

of his wound in the arm ; and so greatly was he displeased with Arabella, that he refused to see her that night, and issued his commands that she should be committed to the custody of the ancient housekeeper, Mistress Deborah, who received a strict charge to confine the young lady to her chamber till Sir Richard's farther pleasure should be known.

On the next morning, after a long interview with Friar John and Sir Richard, Morgan returned to Canterbury, and forthwith dispatched Collins in search of Lawyer Cluny.

CHAPTER III.

LEAVING for a time Sir Francis Morgan and Friar John to their plots, and the arguments by which they acted upon the prejudiced mind of Sir Richard Southwell, we must now return to the afflicted family of Wilford. After what had so lately passed between Sir Francis and Edward, the latter expected daily to hear from his rival in a hostile manner, and he held himself prepared for the meeting; yet, from some extraordinary cause which Wilford could not even guess, he heard nothing of him. Morgan's violent temper, and the frequent quarrels and duels in which he had been engaged, were too well known to his cousin to allow him to suppose that any motive of fear for such a meeting could be the cause of his silence.

Edward had been taught by his father to consider duelling as little better than deliberate murder on the side of the successful party, and as rash, presumptuous, and uncalled for rushing into the presence of the Almighty on the part of the fallen. Edward, therefore, was not a professed or an eager duellist; yet, notwithstanding his father's excellent instructions, he had once or twice in his lifetime (as in the late instance) been hurried away by his passions to forget the counsels of his parent. Still, in cooler moments, he endeavoured to subdue his feelings and to regulate his mind according to that rule of action which had been so forcibly impressed upon him, "Thou shalt do no murder,"—a commandment so plain, imperative, and explicit, that there could exist no doubt in Edward's mind, when he calmly reflected upon it, that what was called the law of honour was in direct opposition to the law of God. Edward therefore, although he could not make up his mind to refuse an honourable invitation of this

kind, nevertheless resolved that he would not himself propose the meeting, more especially as he had so lately drawn upon Sir Francis Morgan in a moment of passion. This resolution may appear extraordinary in a young man of Edward's spirit; but be it remembered that he was the son of a reformed clergyman, who had early endeavoured to imbue his mind with first principles, and that he was also a sincere Christian.

Another thing appears extraordinary;—that Sir Francis, having determined upon using the means within his power to attack Edward under the sanction of the laws, should now delay his purpose, and still to suffer his cousin to be at large. But so it was, and circumstances hereafter to be stated may probably account for such an apparent inconsistency in the conduct of Sir Francis Morgan.

Alice continued in Thornton's house so ill, that she was merely able to leave her bed for a few hours in the day. It is true that her health had long been declining; but no doubt can exist

that the anxious state of her feelings, and the dreadful suspense in which she was kept as to the final issue of the charges brought against her husband, must have contributed to her illness; and possibly the removal from her comfortable home to the damp prison of Canterbury Castle, where she was first confined, in her state of mind and body, had also its share in throwing her into her present dangerous condition.

Rose, who was a most warm-hearted, affectionate child, remained with her mother by Thornton's permission; and it was most probably owing to her dutiful and unremitting cares that her mother was still in existence. Rose, like her mother, had keen feelings; but, unlike her, she possessed an extraordinary firmness of mind. She was one of those rare creatures who could preserve both fortitude and calmness of spirit under the most afflicting circumstances, and who could maintain that power, of all others the most difficult, the perfect go-

vernment of her mind. This was her day of trial, and she supported it nobly. With her mother, she was not only a friend but a monitor; and, fearing the worst calamity might befall her father, she endeavoured gently to prepare his unhappy wife to meet it with fortitude, to regulate her feelings, and to bow herself with entire submission to the will of Providence.

In the few interviews Rose was allowed to hold with her brother, she forbore all complaints against Thornton, or the cruel enemies of her family, lest, by irritating his mind, he might be induced, in a moment of passion, to say or to do something that would injure himself and could not possibly benefit his parents. When she was permitted to visit her father in prison, she preserved, whilst with him, even an air of cheerfulness, comforting him by an assurance that every thing was done that could be done to preserve the life of her mother, and always joining with him in his prayers that God would in His own good time, show mercy to His

suffering people, and save them from the power of their enemies.

During her attendance upon her mother in the Bishop's house, she had many interviews with Thornton. In all of these she preserved her self-command. When Rose thought that a favourable moment offered for entreaty, she endeavoured to use it for the benefit of her parents. She was respectful and calm in her deportment even to this blood-thirsty persecutor of her family. But still there were moments when she told him the truth, and went so far as to say, that possibly the day might come, when it would prove to be his own interest, even in a worldly view, to show some pity, some mercy to her persecuted family. And, with an undeviating firmness of manner, she constantly charged him to mind what he did to them, and not to venture one iota beyond the power that was given to him by the law in the execution of his office ; since, if he did so, as assuredly as she then spoke to him, with God looking upon

them both, she would herself hereafter call him to an account, should she live to do so.

Thornton, who was scarcely ever known to spare any one, appeared to be governed by some feelings, when in her presence, for which he could not account; so powerful, even with the worst, is the calm, steady, and unimpassioned superiority of a great and firm mind. Thornton, extraordinary as it may appear to others, and did even to himself, not only endured this conduct in Rose, but even showed her a greater degree of indulgence than he was ever known to evince towards any other unhappy being within his power. He sometimes felt that he was even awed by her, and, angry with himself for allowing such a feeling to creep upon him, he made up his mind to treat her with the greatest cruelty. In contradiction, however, to this resolution, at other times he determined to endeavour to win her by the most unlimited display of affection, to corrupt her principles, and to destroy what appeared to

him the proud and assuming innocence of her mind.

The vices of Gardiner, Bishop of Winchester, had been notorious; so that, whilst he had assented to the persecution of the *married* clergy, and would imprison any poor wretch who was known to eat flesh on a Friday, he was said to be himself both a dissolute liver and a drunkard,* and Thornton in these vices resembled him.

Harpsfield, who under a hideous human form carried the spirit of a fiend, delighted in cruelty; and his hatred of whatever was good or amiable seemed to rise with the degree of excellence in the object. He hated Rose for the unbending firmness of her spirit, that had never once flinched, even before the cruel and blasphemous threats that he had used to overcome her strength of mind, and to produce a change in her faith. Harpsfield constantly reproached Thornton for

* Fuller, in his Church History, positively asserts such to have been the character of Gardiner.

his refusal to proceed against Rose as a heretic ; and more than once entreated the Bishop of Dover, that if he would not himself deal with her in the matter, to turn Rose over to him. But Thornton as constantly replied that she was very young, and had been ill-taught ; and that if, by giving her time, she could be brought round to the true faith, the firmness of her character would render her a zealous member of the Church, and an honour to those who had succeeded in the work of her conversion under such peculiar circumstances.

Rose continued to comfort and to attend upon her mother, whilst Owen Wilford remained in prison at Canterbury Castle. At the commencement of his sufferings, he was there cruelly treated ; being thrown into a vault or dungeon under ground, in one of the towers of the Castle, his legs fastened by a chain of iron to a post, with no other bed than the stone floor covered with a little straw. And so scanty was his allowance of food, and of

common necessities, that if, at his advanced age, such sufferings had long continued, he must have perished from mere sickness and want, before the day of trial.

However, no doubt can exist, that Sir Richard Southwell exerted his power, as Sheriff of the County, to release him from this hard condition; since Owen was soon removed to an airy apartment in the Castle, and was continually supplied with many comforts, from some unknown source, that (as they came to him through the hands of the keeper of the prison) must have been one of great power, else would the conveyance of such supplies have involved both the donor of them, and the keeper, in a severe punishment, for thus affording aid to a heretic.

Not only comforts of lodging, food, and raiment, were supplied, but even pens, ink, paper, and books. The latter were certainly of the Roman Catholic Church; and Wilford employed many of his prison-hours in using the

pens and ink, (not, perhaps, as it was supposed he might use them, to stir up friends to attempt his release,) in writing comments, and in answering many of the false and bigoted doctrines contained in these volumes. At certain hours each day, he was allowed to walk in the courtyard amongst the prisoners, where, determined to use his tongue, so long as the exercise of it should be granted him, to the glory of God, he entered into familiar conversation with any of the prisoners to whom he thought he could afford honest counsel, or religious instruction. He reproved vice, he exhorted to repentance, he spoke patience, he commended industry, he preached submission to the laws, an obedience to rulers, and, above all, an entire trust and resignation to the will of God. Such were his general instructions; and, fearing lest his mouth would be stopped in doing good to the suffering or sinful inmates of the prison if he publicly touched on doctrinal points, he was careful, whenever he endeavoured to support the cou-

rage of those who were in charge on suspicion of heresy, to give his exhortations in a low voice, and in a part of the court-yard retired from those who would have silenced him at once by the exertion of their power.

Yet his opportunities to comfort any of these unfortunate people were but few, since few of them were allowed the liberty of breathing the open air in the court-yard, and none (except himself) after they had undergone a preparatory examination before Thornton; as, if they would not recant after such an examination, they were instantly committed to Canterbury Castle, or to Munday Hole, a frightful cell of suffering, within the walls of the city.

We learn from the pages of Fox, that these persecuted followers of the Reformed Church were generally placed in dark and reeking dungeons; that some were starved to death, and that others suffered the most horrid and inhuman tortures, under the direction of Harpsfield and Thornton; but more particularly the for-

mer, who rivalled even Bonner himself in the wanton cruelty of his deeds. These accounts are so dreadful in their detail, that we here allude to them but in general terms, and gladly drop the curtain over scenes too revolting to bear retrospection.

Owen Wilford had been duly apprized of the time that he was to take his trial for his opinions, before the Spiritual Court about to be held in Canterbury; and as he was one morning engaged in making certain notes, which he designed should assist him in the answers he would probably be called upon to give on some important points of doctrine, he was surprised by the arrival of Thornton's secretary, Lawyer Cluny, who, quite contrary to his usual method, accosted him with a civility of manner that amazed Wilford; and he proceeded to say, that he was commissioned by Thornton to invite him to the Bishop's house to dinner.

The surprise of Wilford was extreme; but, delighted at the hope which this extraordinary

civility, and still more extraordinary invitation, gave him, that possibly he might, by accepting it, obtain an opportunity to converse with Rose, and even perhaps with Alice, he was careful in his reply not to offend Cluny, nor to reject the proposal, of which the secretary was made the bearer. Still, desirous to fathom the drift of Thornton's object in inviting him, after expressing his thanks for so unexpected a civility, he asked for what purpose it was shown towards him.

“For the most friendly of all purposes, I assure you, Master Wilford,” said the Attorney; “for though, according to the strict letter of the law, as it stands in the Statutes, revived in the second of the present reign, no person or persons accused of heresy can, may, or shall be suffered to stray, go, or sunder themselves from the officers or keepers having him or them in wardship on the aforesaid charge; still, under the Proclamation of her Grace, Queen Mary, a power is given, and to

be holden, and may be used by the Bishops, Suffragan Bishops, or other persons acting under her Grace's Commission."

"I beseech you," said Owen, "be so good, Master Attorney, as to answer my question in plain terms; for I am an old man, having a weak head, that may not in a moment comprehend the terms of law, which, to my way of thinking, rather confounds than assists the matter."

"Pardon me, Master Wilford," replied Cluny, "the law is precise, and every word carries a weight with it, without which the balance of justice could not be made up to turn the scale to the true poise."

"I am sorry for it," said Owen. "Since the law of justice is a plain thing, being founded on the law of truth; I would that her words were as simple."

"Pardon me, Master Wilford," answered Cluny, "that would never do. Then we should have no lawyers. For you see, Master

Wilford, the law having many clauses, sentences, terms, phrases, and recapitulations, every one of which hath a weight, the very difficulty of coming to a clear understanding of the meaning thereof, makes it necessary that the attornies should have the handling of such matters, they being far beyond the comprehension, understanding, or explaining of the ordinary—that is, the vulgar amongst men.”

“ Have the goodness, Master Cluny, to keep to the point,” said Owen ; “ for, as I think, that is a thing observed even in the courts of law, to hold to the matter in debate.”

“ Most true,—most certainly it is so,” replied Cluny ; “ all irrelevant matter being, as you say, inadmissible, and being held as much out of place as hearsay evidence, which is never admitted, except in cases of heresy.”

“ I am sorry it should be admissible in any case,” said Wilford. “ But what may be the Bishop of Dover’s motive to will me to his house ?”

“ The Bishop of Dover, as I said before,” replied Cluny, “ having resolved upon acting in your case, as he hath the full power to do, according to the tenor of the Proclamation, under the Commission aforecited, can, and will, for a certain space, take you out of this wardship, or imprisonment, and will remove you to his own house, there to be kindly entertained at his good pleasure: and his farther will and pleasure you will learn from himself, it being beyond my commission, and far wide from the letter of my instructions, to state the same.”

“ I will attend you, then,” said Owen. “ I had, thank God! learned to rest satisfied where I was; but, if God wills it otherwise, I am also content. I suppose that the bill-men will attend us, since I am not to be trusted, I conclude, to pass through the streets of Canterbury attended only by you, Master Cluny?”

“ Why yes, a few bills and gleaves will bear us company, I must say,” answered Cluny: “ and Catchpole Miller goes along with us,

too; but only for form's sake. You know, Master Wilford, that the law hath many forms that must be obeyed, though the vulgar hold them but as lets, as hindrances to justice, delaying the same, and adding to the costs; but still, from being a decency, like a sober garment, or, as I would say, a cover to the law, it may not be dispensed with. Thus, these men bear us company only for form's sake, I assure you."

"I have no objection to it," said Owen. "We are enjoined by a wise and great Teacher, to submit to the ordinances of government, to obey the powers that be."

"A most excellent rule, certainly," cried Cluny, "and one that I always respect myself. I always obey the powers that be. Master Wilford, you may think, perhaps, that I am your enemy, because, in obedience to the powers that be, I was the other day obliged to see you secured by the leg in that cursed damp vault—(I beg pardon for swearing before a gentleman

in a gown and tippet,) but I loathe that dungeon so much, it makes me forget myself."

"Yet, Master Cluny," said Wilford, "methinks that I have most cause to loathe it, whom you put there; and surely the iron was something tight round my right leg, for I have walked lame ever since, as you shall see by the slow pace with which I shall keep you company in our walk."

"Pray, take your time," replied Cluny, with much civility; "take your own time, I beg, as Judge Morgan says to the Crown witnesses. But, as I said before, you may possibly think me your enemy for what I did; but, I assure you, it is no such thing. I merely obeyed my superiors, as I always do with pleasure, and as I should have done, had I been ordered to see you safe to your burning, or to set you in the stocks, or to set you free out of prison. I always obey the powers that be, with pleasure; as in duty bound, according to law and the Proclamation."

“ You are happy in having such a uniform measure by which you can regulate all your duties,” said Owen : “ for myself, I am not so fortunate ; for, when I have sometimes found a duty necessary, it has been also painful.”

“ That is because your duties do not belong to the law,” replied Cluny ; “ for one of the chief beauties of the law is, (as the learned Judge Morgan is wont to say,) that it never troubles the conscience.—Catchpole Miller and the bills are ready : shall we set out for the Suffragan Bishop of Dover ?”

“ By all means,” said Owen ; and they did so accordingly.



CHAPTER IV.

IF Owen Wilford was surprised by the invitation he had received from Thornton, he was still more so by the reception that was given to him by that reverend person, who now met him in a manner not only civil, but kind in the extreme. Even Harpsfield was social, as far as the brutality of his nature would allow him to be so ; since his sociability, at the best, might alone be compared to the pacific deportment of a tame bear, whose savage aspect threatens, and inspires fear, though the jaws of the ferocious animal may be muzzled, and his paws held to the ground by a chain. Friar John was also present to give Wilford a welcome, which he did after the fashion of his country, blending haughtiness with gravity.

Sir John Baker welcomed Wilford, as, after his way of thinking, a welcome should best be given, by offering him a share of the flagon of ale with which Sir John was refreshing himself, after his arrival to meet him at the Bishop's. Wilford had come prepared, apprehending that he should be asked, perhaps, to hold a debate, in a more quiet manner than was allowed at his examination, on matters of theology. But, to his amazement, not a word was said about the subject. He was kindly invited even to visit the sick chamber of his wife,—a wonderful permission, considering that she lay under sentence to do penance for having lived with a man who was her husband, though in holy orders. We pass in silence the affecting scene of this meeting between Alice, Wilford, and Rose, so much desired, and so little expected, by either of the parties.

After the interview was over, Wilford was led into the Bishop's garden, where he was shown its “pleasant walks and long arcades;”

and even Harpsfield offered to play with him a game at tables, if he would like to follow that pastime, when they should return to the hall; and Sir John Baker declared, that if Lawyer Cluny would but stoop down to pick up the bowls for him on the green lawn, and run after, and bring them back again from the jack, he did not care if he played with Parson Wilford for a rump and a dozen of Rhenish, in a neighbourly way; whilst Friar John expressed a hope that the day would come when the Spanish and the English should be as one nation; and, to crown all, Thornton talked to Wilford of Queen Mary's great respect for his character, her earnest desire to promote him, and to do him good, and finally, asked Owen in what part of Kent he would like to have a good living.

Before Wilford, who was actually dumb with astonishment, could tell how to answer these extraordinary marks of good-will, Sir John Baker, puffing and blowing, waddled up

to his side, winked his eye, as he gave him a twitch of the sleeve, and said, "A word in your ear, Master Owen, for I have a hint for you that the Churchman dare not speak; but I am secular, you know, so I am not so meally-mouthed as they must be."

Owen, thinking to gain some explanation of this scene from Sir John, gladly drew with him aside, and said, "I shall thank you, indeed, Sir John Baker, if you will explain to me the cause of all these civilities, that you must suppose appear something strange to me, after what passed at our last meeting. Are your friends practising a jest upon me, or are they honest and sincere?"

"Honest as the day," replied Sir John; "sincere as if they were drunk—mean you nothing but good—nothing but what they say. And I will tell you all they mean, and more than they dare say themselves. And so you see,—do you well heed me now?"

"I am all attentive," said Owen.

“ Why, then, you see,” continued Sir John Baker, “ if you have so great a fondness for your old dame there, as it seems you have, why, I don’t know that we shall insist upon the penance.”

“ May God reward you for it !” replied Owen ; “ she is very sick indeed.”

“ Ay, she may die, like enough,” cried Sir John ; “ and what if she does, man ? there are more old women than one in the world, I trow ! and if she lives, and your fancy holds to her, why you may still be allowed to keep her in a snug way, under the rose, as it might be, and it shall never be cast in your teeth to stand in the way of the Queen’s preferment ; for men are men, though they be Churchmen, as my Right Reverend Friend, the Bishop of London, says, and so we must indulge them ; and if they keep the thing private, no scandal falls upon the Church ; and the Queen, bless her gracious heart for it !—she is no picker of holes in the garments of those she takes into favour. That’s

all I have got to say ; and if you are a wise man, you 'll understand me ; for a blind horse may find the stable, if you turn his nose in the right road for the door."

Here the Justice made a pause, having fairly talked himself out of breath. At length he regained sufficient wind to stammer out, with a chuckle, as he spread the open palms of his hands upon his " fair round belly," " Yonder goes the trencher varlet to Master Bishop, to say that the dinner is ready ; so let us loosen our doublets and prepare.—Come hither, Lawyer Cluny," added the Justice, in a loud voice. The Attorney was in a moment by his side. " Send back the people," said Sir John, " who came to me about binding over the 'prentices, for I really can't see them now."

" They have walked five miles to wait upon your Worship," said Cluny ; " and perhaps they may grumble, and think it hard, to have to come the same journey over again to-morrow."

" That 's their business, and not mine, Mas-

ter Cluny," replied Sir John; "and as to their liking or disliking, what is that to me? I have business of importance, man,—business; and so tell the rogues, and send them back whence they came.—And now, Parson Wilford, have with you to dinner, and you will taste as rare a fricasee of cocks-combs as ever you tipped over tongue. And such ale! mind that. Stick to the cocks-combs and the home-brewed, and I'll say you are a wise man."

The Justice led the way, Wilford followed, and all the party partook of a dinner that would have rejoiced even the citizens of London themselves, on the inauguration of their chief magistrate. After dinner the cup was briskly circulated round the table, and Owen Wilford remarked that his entertainers seemed to take unusual pains to press upon him a conviviality, that he deemed not only inconsistent with his calling, but also with the general rules of temperance and sobriety. He partook in moderation, both of the good cheer of the home-brewed,

so much commended by Sir John Baker, and of the excellent wines, but positively refused to go one cup beyond moderation ; whilst his companions filled out and passed the flagon, more like heathens doing observance to the orgies of Bacchus, than as members of the humble and sober Christian church.

All the party but Owen Wilford were now well warmed with wine ; for even the cool-headed Lawyer, and the cold-hearted Friar, had taken an extra cup upon this extraordinary occasion. At length Sir John Baker, who seemed to have anticipated, in these moments of conviviality, the purpose of his companions, managed to raise up his unwieldy bulk, and, as he stood rolling (something like a heavy laden vessel, as she labours in a deep swell) from side to side, he extended a brimming cup in his hand, and after having bestowed a portion of its contents on the garments of Cluny and Harpsfield, as he sat between them, exclaimed, in a true tavern roar, “ Here’s to our new

brother ! I drink this to the joyful recantation of Owen Wilford."

Owen looked up in Sir John's face, as if to inquire his meaning ; but the reiterated exclamations of the worshipful Justice prevented his speaking. In a moment the truth flashed across his mind ; he had been brought hither, flattered, kindly entertained, and promises had been held out to him of the Queen's favour, the wine had been pressed upon him to unsettle or to stupify his intellects, and all to procure his desertion of the Truth. He was convinced it was so, but he sat still and said nothing. It seemed that his silence was very differently interpreted to what he designed ; for even Thornton now touched upon the subject, and congratulated him upon his worthy, his exemplary, his wise, and his just obedience to her Most Gracious Majesty, and the true Church.

Lawyer Cluny took the hint : ink-horn and pen were soon ready, for they were the Lawyer's arms, his weapons ever held prepared to do the

work of his masters. He now shuffled in his pocket, and ventured to bring forth a written paper, and, with unparalleled impudence, laid it before Wilford, and bid him sign it. "You have only just to put your name at the bottom of the paper," said Cluny; "it is regularly indited, it wants nothing but the name and the date, and I will witness it; it wants nothing else—"

"But my consent to the same?" said Owen.

"Assuredly," cried Cluny: "your own free consent; no force is used, or the instrument would be invalid. You will have the goodness to sign your name."

"Not before I have read the contents of the paper," replied Wilford. All the party were now mute, attentively observing what passed. "Certainly," said Cluny, "that is quite legal. But I will save you the trouble; I will read it, if you please; it is quite a thing in the course of my practice; quite professional, I assure you." And he began to mutter over the open paper, as he held it in his hand

“Pshaw !” said Sir John Baker, “it wants but the scratch of a pen. Can’t you write your name, man, and save us the din of that fellow’s tongue? Cluny’s reading sounds worse than the gabbling of a flock of geese.”

“I will spare you the hearing, and Master Attorney the reading of that paper,” replied Owen Wilford; “since I must be allowed to read it myself, before I can be expected to add my signature.”

“What ! do you refuse to sign it?” cried Harpsfield; “then I know what follows.”

“I have yet neither refused nor assented,” answered Owen,—“suffer me to read it;” and he took the paper from Cluny’s hand.

A second pause ensued, whilst Owen was reading. He read the paper through with the most perfect composure, and, as it was now twilight, (for, being nearly the end of the month of October, the days were short,) he had walked to the window, in order to see clearly the contents of the instrument. As soon as he had concluded

it, Owen suddenly tore the paper, with vehemence dashed it upon the ground, and stamping his foot upon it, he accompanied the action with looking stedfastly at the Commissioners, as he exclaimed, "Thus ! thus I trample upon the devices of Satan ! and thus I cast him and you from me for ever !"

Wilford advanced towards the door, as if about to retreat ; Cluny jumped up and interposed, and said, with his accustomed impudence, " Shall I call Catchpole Miller and the bills ?"

" Call whom you will," replied Owen ; " I shall be glad to quit this chamber ; for surely Satan is already here, and lays in wait to tempt me."

Cluny laughed, and said, " If it is so, he will not so easily let you go, I fancy, Master Parson."

" Bring the picklouse fellow, the filthy Lutheran, back again," cried Sir John Baker.

" He shall suffer for this insolence," said Thornton.

“Put him on the thumb-screw,” cried Harpsfield, “and see how the hand that tore up the offer of the Queen’s mercy will like that.”

“He has rejected the offer of the Queen’s mercy indeed,” said Friar John, “and must expect none from us.”

“I do not ask it—I had almost said I do not desire mercy from you,” replied Wilford; “at least, not on such terms as you would give it me, to sign a solemn recantation of the Truth. This I will never do. I might have guessed the purpose of the hollow kindness you have shown to me this day. I am not the first man who has been sobeset, so tempted. But, I thank God, the deceit has not been prolonged; it has begun and ended in the same day.”

“Have the rascal back to prison!” exclaimed Sir John.

“See him committed to the dungeon in the West Tower,” cried Thornton.

“Bind him hand, neck, and foot with irons,” said Harpsfield.

“And I will take care,” cried Friar John, “that henceforth no person, whatever be his power, shall interfere to mitigate the just punishment of such an obstinate, hardened, and abominable castaway as he is.”

“Cluny, call up the billmen, and prepare to take him hence,” said Thornton.

The Lawyer departed to call up Miller and his attendants, as he was ordered to do. The affair instantly took wind in the house; and the circumstance of Wilford's having torn up and trampled under foot an offer of the Queen's pardon, on the condition that he would agree to recant, was soon spread and talked of all over the Bishop's house. Even Rose heard of it, and, anxious to see her father before he was once more carried back to prison, she rushed towards the room in which he was still held by the Commissioners.

Cluny was without the door, talking to Miller, and, seeing Rose's intention to enter the chamber, he attempted to oppose her. But

Rose was a strong girl as well as a spirited one, and, without heeding the impertinent threats of Cluny, she endeavoured to push past him, so as to enter the room.

“Don’t strike me, Mistress Rose,” said the Lawyer. “You had better mind what you are about. Don’t raise your hand in that threatening manner; don’t shake your little fist at me: the thing is actionable, I assure you; and Catchpole Miller, who stands there, is liable to be called upon as a witness. You had better mind what you are doing—”

“Let me pass in to my father,” said Rose; “I know nothing about your actions. I only know that you are a rogue as well as an attorney.”

“That’s a libel!” cried Cluny, “*scandalum magnatum*, and may be tried in the King’s Bench.”

“Let me pass in to my father!” again exclaimed Rose. “I have spoken nothing but the truth.

“That’s the greatest libel of all,” said Cluny; “for it is the chief beauty of our laws, that they will not allow truth itself to be spoken to the injury of character.—Catchpole Miller, you have heard her words. She called me a rogue to my face; be pleased to note the day of the month and the hour.”

“And the time and the place,” said Rose, “when I thus forced a villain to give me entrance to my father.” And so saying, Rose put forth all her strength, suddenly seized the attorney by the arm, fairly got the better in the contest, and nearly upset the man of law, (who loudly threatened an action for such violence,) and rushed into the chamber. In another instant she clasped her father round the neck.

Wilford embraced her with the fondest parental affection; but so great was the fury of the wretches who had endeavoured to entrap him, that they grudged their victim even the melancholy solace of a last embrace of his daughter. Thornton gave the word to part

them ; and Harpsfield, who rejoiced to volunteer any exercise of cruelty, now rose up, and tore Rose with so little consideration from her father, that, in his violence, he actually struck her a blow upon the face. The blood gushed from her nose ; and, on seeing it, the inhuman wretch exclaimed, “ I hope that the next blood that I see of yours, may flow from your heart at the stake.”

“ Monster !” cried Wilford, — “ for you cannot be a man to utter such a wish against this poor maiden.”

“ And if it should be so,” said Rose calmly, “ that blood shall rise as a witness between you and me at the last day.—Farewell, father ; may God comfort you, and be to you the same God of protection and of mercy that He was to Daniel, when that faithful servant was cast amongst the lions in their den.”

“ What do you mean by lions, Mistress ?” said Thornton.

“ Ferocious beasts,” replied Rose, “ whose nature it is, never to spare human blood.”

“And do you dare to make us out to be such beasts?” cried Harpsfield.

“I leave that to God and to your own conscience,” answered Rose. “Your own acts will tell you what you are.—My dear father, I—”

“Gag her, I say,—gag her!” cried Sir John Baker: and the inhuman Justice of the Peace put his hands before her mouth, and held them there till Owen Wilford was removed from the chamber. Scarcely had he quitted it, when Mother Garnish, the celebrated heretical compounder of fricaseed cocks-combs, came running into the room with a ladle in her hand, as if she had hastily quitted that employ, which, on account of her great skill in it, had saved her life, and instantly exclaimed, “Mistress Rose, go to your mother; for the poor Dame has heard of what is going on in the house about your father, and she is fallen into such a fit, that burnt feathers put to her nose won’t bring her to, and we do think she is dying.”

Rose heard her words, notwithstanding the uproar that was still in the room. She sud-

denly tore herself from the hands of the Justice, who attempted to detain her, and, with a speed that defied interruption, ran back to the apartment appropriated for the use of her mother and a few other female prisoners, whom, from some motive of policy or villany, Thornton detained in his own house,—a practice that had been resorted to by Bonner also, in more instances than one.

The efforts of Rose succeeded in once more restoring the unhappy Alice to the miseries of life. In the mean time, Friar John had departed, highly provoked at the failure of the scheme that had been devised to procure Wilford's recantation. Wilford had been the bosom friend of Cranmer, and was believed to have assisted that great man in many of his works on the reformation of the Church. His character stood high for learning and for probity; and though he had been but the vicar of the small parish of Wellminster, he was well known and generally beloved in Kent. To

procure *his* recantation was therefore deemed an important object, as the continual burning of heretics seemed rather to strengthen and confirm the doctrines of the Reformation than to subdue them. An artful plot had been devised to entrap Owen ; and it is most likely the temptations prepared for him would have been much longer held out, had not Sir John Baker, when half drunk, prematurely introduced the subject of their meeting. The plot had failed ; and Sir John now arose to stagger down-stairs in order to mount his *moile*, attended by two of his domestics, armed with sword and buckler, to return to his own home ; and here we shall leave him, a grievous burthen to the animal's back, whilst we return to Thornton and Harpsfield.

The latter now took occasion to observe, (as he saw Thornton was greatly irritated,) that the Suffragan's indulgence to Rose Wilford was much to be condemned. And he continued, by sundry artful speeches, to stir up strife, and to remind his companion of the

insolent manner in which she had compared him to the beasts that were intended to devour Daniel. And Harpsfield even went so far as to say, that if he should be questioned by her Majesty's council, or by Bonner, on the subject of Thornton's indulgence to this young woman, who was known to be a heretic, and the daughter of a most contumacious offender, he should be obliged to speak the truth, and to state how often he had vainly remonstrated upon the subject with his fellow-commissioner.

Thornton, greatly irritated, vexed with Harpsfield for the freedom of his discourse, angered by the late scene, and the failure of his scheme on Owen, was now worked up into a state of feeling equally various and wicked. He therefore resorted to a new means of cooling his passions, by pouring cup after cup down his throat, whilst Harpsfield followed his example. Wine acts differently on different men, according to their dispositions. With some it brings on stupidity ; in others it awakens mirth ;

this man it makes good-natured, and that man it renders brutal. So was it now with Harpsfield and Thornton: in the former, it aroused the worst feelings of his naturally savage and surly temper; and in Thornton it gave birth to fierce and vehement passions. Harpsfield at length retired into an adjoining room, in order to write, as well as he could now write, an order to the keeper of the prison, to treat Owen Wilford with the utmost severity.

Thornton arose also to be gone; when, just as he opened the door, his eye glanced on Rose Wilford, who carried in one hand a small pitcher of water, and in the other a lighted candle.

“Where are you going, Mistress Rose,” said Thornton, “with that stealthy pace like a thief?”

“To my mother,” replied Rose. “She is feverish, and begged me to fetch her water to drink.”

“Come in here, Mistress, for a moment,” said Thornton, “for I must speak to you.”

Rose hesitated, pleaded her mother's illness, and was about to pass on.

"Nay!" said Thornton. "If it likes you not to obey me, I will take care your mother has no more attendance of yours. And I will cause you to be locked up in Munday Hole for the night."

Rose, greatly alarmed at the thought that her mother might be deprived of her attendance at a time when she so much needed it, reluctantly obeyed, and entered the room as she was commanded. Thornton shut the door, took the pitcher and the candle from her hand, and placed them on the table. For a moment he stood silent, gazing upon Rose, as if he hardly knew his own purpose in having detained her. The recollection of the treatment that her father had so lately experienced at the hands of the Bishop, swelled with indignation the bosom of his daughter; and, unable wholly to repress the expression of her feelings, she now asked him, if he had called her into the room only to add cruelty to cruelty. "You tore my father

from me," continued Rose, "before I could beg his blessing. I beseech you, then, do not deprive me of my mother's. Let me return to her; for she is, perhaps, upon her death-bed." And Rose wiped away a tear that started to her eye as she spoke.

"And what are such vile old heretics to thee, —to thee, my pretty damsel?" replied Thornton. "If death now takes away the one, he will but show her the way to the place of the wicked before the other goes there also. But you are young, and, by St. Mary! lovely too. You should think of life, and the enjoyment of it."

"Do not dare," said Rose, boldly, "thus irreverently to name my beloved parents to me. Do not teach me to hate the very sight of you."

"Hate the sight of me!" said Thornton. "Why, Sweetheart! it shall be your own fault if I am not the kindest friend to you that you have in the world. I swear it by this pretty little hand—I swear that I will be as tender, and as kind, and as loving to you as—"

"Let me go, wretch!" exclaimed Rose, "or

I will appeal to the Cardinal against you. The Queen herself shall know of this insult."

"Tush ! tush !" said Thornton ; " the Cardinal and the Queen must have long ears, indeed, if they could hear you in London. And remember that you are in my house, and in my power at Canterbury."

" I defy your power," cried Rose ; " once more, I command you to let me go. Unhand me!—You have dared to hold me here by violence—unhand me, or I will raise the house with my cries !"

" This house is too much used to hear cries, to be startled by them," replied Thornton ; " many a heretic has been put to the question under my roof—"

" Barbarous villain !" said Rose ; " do you exult in your cruelty ?"

" You defy me, do you ?" continued Thornton, with considerable passion ; " why, are you not in my power ?"

" No," answered Rose ; " I am in the power

of one who can crush thee,—in the power of God himself.

“That’s bold for a heretic to assert, however,” replied Thornton. “Once more, I offer you fair terms. Hear me: we must from this hour,—ay, from this very hour, be either friends or mortal foes. I leave you to make the choice; though I would rather win you than the see of Canterbury.”

“There is, there can be no choice,” said Rose; “yet, there is one way by which even you might become my friend, and I would—”

“Speak it,” replied Thornton eagerly,—“only speak it! What way? what is it? I will give you the half of all that I have, if you want this world’s gear.”

“No,” said Rose, “not that. Free my father from a prison; spread abroad these doors; send my poor mother and myself back to our peaceful home, to meet him there on his return;—do that, and I will forgive you all the past; I will call you a friend indeed.”

“ You forgive me ! You make terms for friendship,” replied Thornton ; “ why, you have a stout heart in that little body, Mistress Rose ; and it almost grieves me to think you will make me your enemy. But we have gone too far to stand on niceties now. This night must decide between us for friends or foes. In plain English, I ask once more, will you be my lady-love ? ”

Rose looked at him scornfully ; “ I would rather be the wretch,” she said, “ condemned by you to your racks and your fires.” And she added, with a peculiar energy of manner, “ I could almost blush for you, when I look upon your gown and think how you disgrace it. How dare you stand there in the sight of God, and thus disgrace His ministry ? ”

“ Nay, then,” cried Thornton ; “ this insolence is beyond bearing. Harpsfield has reproached me with my indulgence towards you. He shall do it no longer. From this hour, know me for your enemy ; I give you up to him.”

“ I shall return to my mother,” said Rose

calmly ; and she advanced towards the table, and took up the candle in one hand, and the pitcher of water in the other. Thornton looked at her stedfastly, incensed at the unshaken firmness of her manner ; and, maddened by the just but severe reproaches she had cast upon him, he rushed out of the room,—called to Harpsfield, who was but in the next chamber,—and, as the Archdeacon obeyed the summons, exclaimed in a voice scarcely articulate with passion, “ Do what you list with her ; I give her up to you from this hour ; Rose Wilford is a daring heretic.” The Bishop of Dover instantly retreated, still raving with anger.

Harpsfield immediately went into the room which Thornton had just quitted, and was about to shut the door, but Lawyer Cluny, who was that moment returned, came in and told him, that he had safely deposited Owen Wilford, according to the Archdeacon’s directions, in a dungeon of Canterbury Castle.

“ May God be with my poor father !” said Rose, “ as He has promised to be with those

who trust in Him. May *He* give him strength to bear the burthen He has suffered to be laid on His faithful servant !”

“ You should have given your father better counsel, if you desired to save him,” observed Harpsfield. “ But, I see, you are like to follow his steps.—Look upon me,” continued the Archdeacon ; “ do you fear me ?”

“ Far less than I fear the man who has just left the room,” replied Rose, “ and who sent you to me. For I know you hate me, but he professed to love me.”

Harpsfield now stood glaring with his fierce eyes upon Rose, whilst a savage exultation overspread his horrid features. “ I see you will burn, you naughty harlot,” said he, “ for I know your faith ; but I will put you to the trial.—Here,” he continued, as he drew forth a small cross from under his gown,—“ here, kneel down before that ; declare that you believe his Holiness of Rome to be God’s vicar here on earth ; kiss the cross, or I will make you suffer.”

“ I will worship no graven image,” replied Rose, “ and I will acknowledge no power on earth that has not its warrant in the written Word of God.”

“ I see she will burn,” said Cluny, who was still present ; “ that’s a clear case,—her own words are evidence.”

“ I will prove her,” cried Harpsfield ; “ she will cry loud enough, ay, and disclaim her faith too, if a flame should but touch the end of her little finger.”

“ I will not, as God shall judge me,” said Rose.

“ I have almost a mind to try,” continued Harpsfield.

“ Do so,” replied Rose ; “ put me to the proof ; and if I once so far forget myself, to raise my voice against my Maker, hold my faith for falsehood.”

“ By the rood, I will make thee cry out then, and that lustily,” said Harpsfield ; “ I will prove the harlot ;” and he took the candle out of her hand.

“Holy Virgin,—surely you would not,” ejaculated Cluny.

“Peace, you knave,” said Harpsfield; “I will prove the heretic by a fiery test!” And with these words, he seized Rose by the arm, and, holding her fast by the wrist in his inhuman grasp, with his other hand he held the flaming candle under her little palm, and let the fire do its work.

Rose stood perfectly still, holding the pitcher in her left-hand,—for it was the right which Harpsfield had submitted to the torture. She never spoke, not a sigh escaped her lips; but, raising her eyes upward, she seemed mentally to invoke the support of Providence. This done, she bent her head a little, fixed her eye on the ferocious Harpsfield, and stood with a noble constancy and an unchanged mien, in deep silence, enduring the burning flame. Not a nerve in her body appeared to be shaken; for, though the pitcher of water that she held in her left-hand was full, not a drop of it fell to the ground.

Cluny, even Cluny, turned aside his head, as if ashamed to witness the scene; and Harpsfield, who had gone through the whole catalogue of tortures as an executioner, was astonished at such firmness of spirit.

At length the sinews of her hand, that were withered by the flame, cracked, and burst asunder. Rose only turned her eyes for a moment and looked upon her hand. Awestruck, confounded, and even abashed by her magnanimity, Harpsfield dashed the candle on the ground, uttered a horrid oath, and walked towards the lower end of the room.

“Have you done with me?” said Rose.

“Yes, woman, angel, or devil,—for I know not what you are,” cried Harpsfield; “for something more or less than human you must be.”

“I may retire then,” said Rose, “and beg some one in the house for charity to look to my hurt. And my poor mother will be wanting the water.”

“Allow me, Archdeacon,” said Cluny to Harpsfield, “to beg old Martha, who has some knowledge how to treat accidents of this kind, to attend to the poor damsel’s hurt.”

“Do what you will,” cried Harpsfield; “I care not what you do.”

Cluny offered to assist Rose in leading her out of the room,—for she still held the pitcher in the only hand of which she now retained the use; and, turning to Harpsfield, she said, as she paused a moment before she passed the door, “This little quantity of water will, I trust, cool the thirst of fever. But not all the rivers of the earth could quench thy thirst, cruel man, for blood. This withered hand,” she added, and raised it as she spoke, “shall write thy name in the book of perdition, unless it is stayed by thy repentance. May God touch your heart, and forgive you, for it is Him you have offended!”

CHAPTER V.

THE course of our narrative now obliges us to return to Wellminster Hall, where, it will be remembered, Arabella remained in the custody of Mistress Deborah, the housekeeper, much in disgrace with her father, in consequence of his having become acquainted with the circumstance of Edward Wilford's appearance in the Park, whilst she was engaged with Sir Francis Morgan. Did we here attempt to detail at large the various devices, schemes, and arguments by which the Friar influenced the bigoted mind of Sir Richard, to the injury of his daughter, and the total ruin of Edward in his opinion, our task would find no end. Suffice it, therefore, to say, he so entirely succeeded, that

Sir Richard was now convinced, that, to see his daughter secured by marriage from all possibility of hereafter becoming the wife of Edward, was a point even of religious duty. And so well had Morgan himself seconded the views of the Friar, that Southwell was also convinced that Sir Francis was the most proper person upon earth for the husband of his Arabella. For the deep cunning of the Friar, and the no less consummate hypocrisy of Morgan, had been employed to persuade her father, that they also acted from a generous principle in the hope to rescue her from ultimate ruin, from the loss of soul and body in eternity.

There was likewise such an apparent propriety in Sir Francis protesting, as he did repeatedly, that upon no account would he do violence to the feelings of the Lady Arabella; that he would trust to time and his devoted affection, as well as to her own return to a just view of the subject, when, he was sure, such was the goodness of her disposition, she would

regard him with interest as the person who had been the means of saving her from the toils and the arts of a man who was dangerous to society, an outcast from the true Church and from salvation; for, in what other light could Edward Wilford be considered?

Thus was Sir Richard made the tool of art and infamy, solely by having opened the way, by his own bigotry, to admit such men to his confidence. So that whilst he really loved Arabella with the tenderest affection, and would have given his life to make her happy, he was actually pursuing the means to render her miserable during the remainder of her days. Governed by the advice of Friar John, since the late affair in the Park, Sir Richard had resolutely persisted in denying Arabella any private interview with himself. When they met, it was in the presence of the Friar, whose artful manner of maintaining the misunderstanding that subsisted between the father and daughter, gave Southwell courage to deal harshly with Ara-

bella,—a conduct he never could have supported but for the insinuations John threw out to the disadvantage of the former, and the authority he maintained over the mind of the latter as spiritual director of the family.

Arabella saw herself enslaved by the arts of the Friar. She sometimes felt that she ought to resist them; yet she was one of those beings who can readily enough discern a right mode of action, but who have not resolution or firmness sufficient to practise it. Her gentle spirit bent before the strong passions of others; so that, like a fallen leaf before the winter's wind, she was wafted by their fury in whatever direction they pleased. Her fear too for Edward, lest he should be made a sufferer on her account, induced her to yield many compliances, which even Arabella, with all her weakness, would have shrunk from, had she not been governed by such a motive.

Beset by her father, the Friar, and Sir Francis, tormented with conflicting feelings between

duty and affection, wavering and doubtful even in her religious principles, and unhappy in all the prospects that presented themselves whichever way she turned, there were times when she gave herself up an unresisting victim to misery, and she would repeatedly say to herself, “ Let them have their will : no matter what becomes of me ; I can scarcely be more wretched than I am.”

Having thus far explained the motives that influenced both father and daughter, the reader, perhaps, will be less surprised to find that Sir Francis was now become a regular, acknowledged, and almost accepted suitor of the unfortunate Arabella ; and that she received his visits, which were constantly made in the presence of her father and the Friar, with passive listlessness, as a prisoner receives the daily visits of his keeper, from whom he cannot escape. Arabella’s state of mind had already affected her health ; so that Sir Richard, who could not bear to see her pale looks, somewhat relaxed in his

severities towards her, and once more allowed her the freedom of the Park, under the guidance of Mistress Deborah, in whose fidelity he placed an entire trust.

Things were in this position, when, one evening, contrary to the usual mode of conducting the affair, Sir Francis Morgan surprised Arabella with a visit, whilst her father and the Friar were closeted together. Morgan, on that evening, was alone with her for more than half an hour, during which time Mistress Deborah (who was rather deaf) gained but little knowledge of what passed, by applying her ear to the door on the outside of the room. But certainly, at times, she did hear both their voices loud and high in debate, in a very different tone from what might have been expected, either on the part of an accepted lover, or that of his passive mistress. Soon after, the door was flung open with considerable violence, and Sir Francis rushed out in such a fury, that, running downstairs, he mounted his horse, which he had left

at the hall-door, and galloped off towards Canterbury, without waiting to see either Sir Richard or Friar John.

In a few minutes after he was gone, Arabella also quitted the room, in order to hasten to her own private chamber; and Deborah observed that her cheeks were flushed, that she trembled extremely, but more, it should seem, with anger than from fear, since she cut short the old housekeeper's offer to attend her rather sharply, by saying she wanted not to be tormented with the presence of any one, and charged Deborah not to come near her for that night, accompanying the injunction with closing the door almost in her face. Arabella, however, often changed her mind, and now she did so very speedily, for, in less than half an hour, she called the old housekeeper to her, and with great kindness begged her pardon for what had so lately passed, and for her own hasty manner, which, she said, arose from having been unusually disturbed; and, saying that on the following morning she would

wish to speak to Deborah in private, she dismissed her with a good night.

On the following morning, however, at an early hour, she received a summons to attend her father and Friar John. She instantly obeyed it, and, to her surprise, found the former equipped for a journey. Sir Richard informed her that some business of a public nature called him suddenly to Dover, where he might possibly be detained two, three, or even four days ; he could not specify the time, since it must depend on the nature of the affair, and the circumstances it became his duty to investigate. Friar John, he also informed her, was obliged to set out immediately for Canterbury, to attend a meeting, to be held at the Suffragan of Dover's, on the examination of certain persons charged with heresy ; Arabella would, therefore, for the present, be left to the care of Mistress Deborah.

It now seemed, that, whatever might have passed between the unhappy girl and Sir Francis

Morgan on the previous evening, it had made a deep impression on her mind in his disfavour; since she implored her father, with tears in her eyes, that he would issue orders that Sir Francis should not be admitted to her presence during his absence. Sir Richard could not deny this request, since it was sanctioned by common propriety; for, as he knew that the inquisition about to be held at Thornton's would much detain Friar John in Canterbury, it was obvious Arabella must be alone; delicacy, therefore, rendered her request both becoming and reasonable.

"You had better, Sir Richard," said the Friar, "also issue orders to your daughter, that she should confine herself to the house during your absence at Dover; for, remember, two interviews between her and that wicked heretic have already taken place in the Park."

"If you mean," replied Arabella, "between me and Edward Wilford, I can only answer, that those meetings were purely accidental,

both on his part and on mine; there was no premeditation."

"And so they may be again," said the Friar. "I hope, therefore, Sir Richard will do what is proper for your own peace and safety."

"Well, then, Arabella," said Sir Richard, like a boy repeating a lesson after his master, "I hope you will do what is proper for your own peace and safety, and not quit your chamber till my return. I shall not remain at Dover one moment longer than I find to be necessary."

"Good God!" exclaimed Arabella, and she burst into tears as she spoke; for continual vexation of mind had harassed and weakened her spirits. "Am I always to be used thus? am I to become a prisoner in my father's house? is nothing to be trusted to my own sense of duty?"

Sir Richard could not bear to see her tears, nor her pale looks; and, rising from his seat, he said, with more kindness than he had shown of late to Arabella, "Yes, my dearest child, I

will trust to your own sense of duty, and what you owe both to me and to your present situation as it regards another.—Indeed, Father, she looks very ill; the air may be necessary for her health. Deborah will take care of her; and I dare say that she will not go into the Park, but confine herself to the walks in the garden and the pleasure-grounds near the house.—Farewell, my dearest Arabella! I will trust you; and I am sure you will not abuse my indulgence.”

“ You have nothing to fear, Sir,” said Arabella. “ I hope I shall at all times remember what is due to you, in requital for this and every other act of kindness that I receive from you, my dearest father. I shall be glad of your return.”

The Friar appeared displeased; but Arabella’s tears and pale cheeks for once rose superior to his influence with her father, who took an affectionate leave of his child, and soon after quitted the house in company with Friar

John. That day passed without any thing occurring worthy of note, except that in the evening the Friar sent a message to Arabella, stating that he was so deeply engaged at Canterbury he could not that night return to Wellminster Hall, and also to inquire after the health of his young charge, and if she had been out to take the air during the day. Arabella answered briefly, “that she had been so ill all day she had not quitted her chamber, and did not think she should do so till her father’s return.” So passed the first day of Sir Richard’s absence from home.

On the morrow, Deborah, who loved Arabella better than any thing on earth, having been her nurse in infancy, though afterwards promoted to the dignity of housekeeper, as a reward for her faithful services, at an early hour entered the apartment of her young mistress, with a view to inquire after her health. She found her up, dressed, and in tears. “Dear heart!” said Deborah, “how ill you look this

morning. I thought the posset that I gave you last night, and that I made with my own hands, according to my poor lady's receipt, would have cured these megrims. But I see how it is," continued the old housekeeper, as she shook her head: "They are driving it hard with you, my dear young lady, and you never tell me a word about the matter, though I am as anxious over you as a hen is over her chicken. And I am as close as oak too, as my poor lady used to say of me. But you never tell me a word of what's going on, though I know it all."

"Then if you do," replied Arabella, "there is no need for me to tell you, Deborah, and I have many reasons that have made me silent to you."

"Well, we will talk about it in the garden," said Deborah; "for, I am sure, it cannot be good for you, nor for any gentlewoman, to sit here as you do, mumping alone. So do go down into the garden, and there we will talk of old times; and I will open my heart to you, as I have

longed to do many a time for this age ; indeed, ever since your poor mother died."

" No," said Arabella ; " I think I shall not stir out of my chamber till my father's return ; if it is only to show him I can be trusted to my own discretion ; though Friar John would persuade him to the contrary."

" Well, then," replied Deborah, " if you don't go out, you will eat no more than a manchet of bread all this blessed day, as you did yesterday ; and your father, at last, will be obliged to call in Doctor Argentine, as he has threatened to do long ago."

" I wish he would," said Arabella, mournfully.

" Why, so ?" cried Mistress Deborah : " I have a much better opinion of old Gammer Plaise, the village potecary. Why have such a conceit of Doctor Argentine ?"

" Because I think he might kill me," said Arabella, " as he has done many a sick person under his care. I am sure I could forgive him."

“ Dear heart !” cried the housekeeper, “ to hear how you talk now ! Do go out, and try the open air !” and again she urged Arabella to descend into the garden, but Arabella was positive in her refusal.

“ Well, then,” continued Mistress Deborah, “ if you will not go into the garden, I must tell you something here, that, I think, will flatter you a good deal. Friar John charged me, that if any letters came for you, in your father’s absence, I was to be sure to give them to him ; as if, indeed, that I wanted to be told by him how I was to act ! If he had held his tongue, I should have kept them, perhaps, till Sir Richard returned ; but I am determined to give them to you, if it is only to contradict the Friar. I have got a couple for you, and you shall have them yourself, if it is only to spite that proud, meddling Spanish Friar, who treats me no better than if I handled a mop and pail, like Molly, the scrubbing wench.”

“ Give them to me !” said Arabella eagerly.

“There ’s the first,” replied Mistress Deborah, as she presented a letter to Arabella. She opened it carelessly, after looking at the superscription, read it, and threw it down upon the table, with a “*pshaw* !” peevishly expressed.

“Why, I hope there is nothing to offend you in it,” said Mistress Deborah.

“No,” replied Arabella ; “it is only a tiresome letter from the old Lady Lacklocks, who wants the patterns and the name of the fashioner who made my last suit of pink taffeta.”

“Lady Lacklocks may have the fashioner’s cut,” answered Deborah, “and the patterns too ; but she can never have the youth and the pretty looks of my dear young lady, that makes them both seem so rare. Here is the other letter.”

Arabella took it with indifference ; but no sooner had she cast her eyes upon it, than she turned white as death. Her hands so trembled that she could scarcely hold the paper ; and, sinking into a chair, she could only ask Deborah, “who brought *that* letter?”

“Why, Tommy, the blind boy,” said the

housekeeper ; “ I saw him lurking about under your window as soon as I was up. So down I went, and I made him tell me his business, and give me the letter for you. But I hope there’s no harm done, and that you won’t tell Sir Richard, or Friar John, if I have done wrong.”

“ No, never ! never ! ” Arabella replied hastily. “ I beseech you, Deborah, go and get me a glass of fresh water. Do leave me, for a moment, to myself.”

“ I will go and get you some of my own drops,” said Deborah ; “ they always revive me, if I am fluttered with scolding the maidens when they vex me ; ” and she instantly quitted the chamber.

Arabella eagerly opened the letter, and read as follows, in the greatest agitation :—

“ My dearest heart,

“ It may be, you will tell me, that I ought not to indite these to you. Arabella, I must see you ; and I now do most solemnly conjure

you, in the name of your dead mother, that you will come to me, as soon as you can on receiving these. I shall abide your coming at the foot of your mother's tomb, in Wellminster Church. Her spirit, perhaps, will look upon us. The sanctity of the place I have named, will suit with the occasion that makes me now call upon you, for God's sake, not to deny me. It will also prove to you my sincerity, when I say, that an awful cause exists to render such a meeting necessary. Tommy, the blind boy, has got for me the key of the church, from Gaffer Turf, the Sexton; and as Friar John is busied at Canterbury, he will not be in the way to interrupt us. I only ask you to see me for a few minutes. I am a broken-hearted man,—do not make me a desperate one. Comply with this request; it is most likely the last that will be ever made to you in this world by,

“ Dearest heart, the unhappy

“ EDWARD WILFORD.”

“ I write these in the park, under the old

oak-tree, as blind Tommy waits by me, to take the same for you."

No sooner had Arabella finished this letter than, starting from her seat, scarcely knowing what she did, she hastily snatched up her mantle, put it on with all speed, and was advancing towards the door, when Mistress Deborah returned with the water and the drops. "Why, what, in the name of all the saints, does this mean?" exclaimed the housekeeper, with surprise.

"I must go out this instant!" said Arabella;
"I must and will!"

"And who wills to stop you, sweetheart?" cried Mistress Deborah. "But only stay a moment, and I will put on my cloak and muffler, and just give directions about dinner, and just see the chickens fed, and a few other things done, and then I'll go along with you myself."

"No, no," replied Arabella; "I will not be delayed; I must go this instant."

“Tilley-villey!” cried the housekeeper; “why what a weathercock we are this morning! Just now there was to be no going out till Sir Richard came back, forsooth; and now, it is out we go, and away, without with your leave, or by your leave. But you forget, Mistress Arabella, that your father left me as the most properest person to take charge of you, and, trusting to my prudence, desired me to look to your goings in, and comings out; but I begin to suspect that all is not right in that letter.”

“Dear Deborah,” said Arabella, “I am sure you will not join with Friar John to make me unhappy. You used to love me like your own child, and you are now just doing what would please the Friar when you thwart me. Has he instructed you to treat me so?”

“He instruct me, indeed!” cried Mistress Deborah with indignation at the suspicion of such a thing. “No, my young lady, I would have you to know that I want no meddling Spanish Friar to dictate to me; but, as Sir Richard left

you in my care, I, as a prudent person, must know where you would be going, when you are in such a mighty hurry that you cannot stay for me to go along with you."

"You shall know, Deborah," answered Arabella, "and I will promise you to return in less than an hour: I am going to Wellminster Church."

"To Wellminster Church!" exclaimed Mistress Deborah; "why, what should you go there for?"

"I am going to my mother's tomb," replied Arabella.

"To your mother's tomb," said the house-keeper, greatly softened by the recollection of her deceased lady.—"Oh! my poor dear Mistress, how often I think upon her.—Well, Arabella, if you go *there*, no harm can come from it; I will not thwart you—indeed, I could *wish* you to go there, and to-day. Friar John is absent, and your father too; so, now is my time to speak freely,—and there is something that I must tell

you, it hangs on my mind till I do it ; and, I think, when you have been to look upon the spot where my poor lady's remains must rest till the last day, you will be better prepared to hear me. You will not stay long?"

"No, certainly I will not," replied Arabella ; "and after my return I will listen to all you may have to tell me."

Deborah kissed her young mistress ; and Arabella drew her mantle close around her, and set off with the utmost speed for the church of Wellminster,—reproaching herself, all the way she went, for an act of positive disobedience to her father, so contrary also to every determination by which she had resolved to regulate her conduct during his absence, and yet wholly unable to resist the extraordinary appeal Edward Wilford had made to her feelings.

The church of Wellminster stood apart from the village ; so that any one, by following a particular pathway in the Park, could enter the churchyard without passing down the village

street. The church, as we have before stated, was of Saxon architecture. The spring, famous for its miraculous powers in the Gothic ages, and in honour of which the holy fane had been erected, rose not far from the spot; its pure waters ran sparkling and murmuring from their source, as they glided into a little brook that brawled along the wood, and visited in its course the neighbouring hamlet.

A row of tall and luxuriant elm-trees, closely planted around the four sides of the churchyard, cast a deep shade upon it, and, by presenting their barrier of thick foliage and long branches to intercept the full splendour of the light of day, they gave a melancholy and sombre air to the spot, which was consecrated alike to the use of the living and of the dead. Here, too, many a noble and ancient yew-tree spread its mantle of dark green foliage above the lowly grave. A cross, beautifully carved in stone, and surrounded at its base by a few steps, stood immediately opposite the entrance of this conse-

crated ground, where the rank grass, weeds, and wild flowers, grew about many a mound of earth that contained a poor and now nameless inhabitant; whilst they seemed as little to respect the more costly marks of mortality, where a flat or an upright stone, with the word *Hic jacet* engraved under a death's head, or that of a cherubim, spoke an ambition so natural to man, to leave, though but a fragile one, some record of his name,—this record, in many instances, after a few years, being the only visible memorial that such a creature as it describes had ever been, “to strut and fret his hour upon the stage,” and then be seen no more.

There is a serenity, a silence, and a heart-speaking solemnity in the view of most country churchyards in England, that few persons can witness, without finding its sympathetic influence steal upon them; and the young, the gay—even the thoughtless, cast a look upon the “lap of earth,” the dark and forlorn tenements of death, and give a sigh to the transitory

visions of their own mortality. The happy are depressed by a sight that reminds them of their end ; but the miserable generally feel a relief to their own burthens in a contemplation of the same objects. So was it with Arabella ; for, as she walked hastily along the little foot-path that had for ages been trodden by successive generations, many of whom now rested near the same spot, she thought how vain were all the anxious toils, the heavy griefs of this world, and how soon a few feet of clay would resign them all to nothing.

She had nearly reached the church-porch, whilst making these reflections, when, as she drew nearer, she heard the cheerful whistle of a youngster, who was sitting on a bench within it. The boy started up, but did not turn his head towards her, as he said, “ Is it you, Mistress Arabella ? ”

“ Yes,” replied Arabella : “ poor Tommy ! how gay you are, and yet you are blind.”

“ But I can hear, and walk, and whistle,”

said Tommy; “and I can make baskets too, Mistress Arabella; and so, you see, I have plenty to make me happy.”

Arabella only sighed, and, without speaking, entered the church. She now turned into the aisle where Lady Southwell had been buried, and where the tomb and monumental effigy had been erected to her memory. All was still and solemn, and the subdued and softened light of day, that stole into the church through the deep glories of its painted glass, added considerably to that imposing effect, which the “long drawn aisles,” the massive columns, and the fretted arches of a Gothic edifice never fails to produce on a mind of any feeling. Seated upon the step at the base of the tomb, Arabella beheld Edward Wilford. His head was reclining upon his hand; he seemed musing. As Arabella approached, he rose up, but the shade of deep melancholy, the solemnity of a sorrow too big for utterance, was strongly impressed upon every feature, nor did even the

appearance of Arabella produce the least change in his countenance. His spirit, high and generous as it was, seemed to be completely broken; for, instead of speaking to her, he burst into tears, and suffered them to flow on without an effort to repress them.

Arabella had seen her father as he watched by the corpse of her mother, before the body was removed for ever from his sight, and she now thought that Edward Wilford looked as he did then,—looked like the broken-hearted mourner, when that chill and heavy word *dead* strikes upon his ear; as if the gate of hope was closed by that of the tomb. Arabella felt certain that something extraordinary indeed must have occurred, but she knew not what it was, and she feared to ask; she stood, therefore, silent before Edward, awaiting till this burst of passionate sorrow should subside and allow him to address her.

At length he did so, and endeavoured to overcome his emotion, as he said, “ Arabella,

this is kind—kind indeed, if you knew what I have suffered.” He paused a moment, and then added, “ I will not play the child !—No, in the sight of the living and just God, who will not suffer such things to pass unrequited, in this place, consecrated to His name, I swear, to live to be a man, to take a dreadful vengeance on the accursed persecutors of—of—”

“ Oh ! do not !” said Arabella ; “ I implore you, do not, in God’s holy church, make vows that are forbidden by His laws ; else His wrath may fall on you and yours for such an act of daring.”

“ It has fallen, Arabella,” exclaimed Wilford ; and he looked upon her with a countenance pale as death, and a wild expression about the eye as he spoke,—“ it has fallen. My sister, my dear sister, has been put to the torture !”

“ Great God !” cried Arabella ; “ do not say so.”

“ It is true ! it is true !” continued Wilford ;

“ they have maimed, burned, withered her poor hand. And not content with this, when I went to their accursed dwelling, and sought to remove her, that she might have some proper care, they spurned my supplication, and would not allow me to see her.”

“ Who dared do so ?” inquired Arabella.

“ Harpsfield ! that monster,” said Wilford ; “ that wolf—that devil ! I drew my sword upon him. I would have killed him on the spot, when I learned this cruel act, but for his people ; they disarmed me, and said I was a madman.”

“ Thank God, they did !” cried Arabella ; “ and that your hand is saved from blood, though it would have been the blood of the guilty. Leave vengeance to God,—to Him who saith it is His own.”

“ I did worse than that,” continued Edward distractedly. “ When I found myself disarmed, and that all my reproaches were lost on such a wretch, I—it is madness to think of it—I humbled myself before him ; I begged, I

sued, I implored for pity,—for pity on my sister; but as well might the martyrs, whom these cruel men drag to the stake, beseech the flame not to consume their bodies into ashes, as I might use words that would move the soul of such a wretch. I was at last, I believe, in pity, driven from the house, even by this man's own people, lest he should wreak his vengeance on me too, as he has done on my poor Rose. But, thank God, I have devised a means that, I hope, will confound them all."

"Beware how you act," said Arabella; "for you do not know how much they have the power to defend their deeds under the sanction of the Queen."

"May curses fall upon her!" exclaimed Wilford.

"Hush! hush!" said Arabella; "think if any one should but hear you."

"God hears me," cried Wilford; "and He will heed me. I am driven almost to desperation. My father is in a prison; my mother, I fear, is

dying in Thornton's house; and poor Rose, still suffering from the agony of the torture, is thrown into a common dungeon in Canterbury Castle, there to perish for want of proper aid."

"She shall not," said Arabella: "my father is the chief officer of this county. I will fall at his feet; I will die there, unless he promise me to release her. I will assist her this moment."

"To implore you to do so," replied Wilford, "was the chief reason for which I now sought this interview. But there is another cause that made it necessary we should meet. To-morrow, Arabella, I leave Canterbury."

"For what purpose?" inquired Arabella eagerly.

"I have, thank God," continued Wilford, "met with one honest man. Though he is of the Romish Church, yet is he an enemy to such cruel practices. I knew him in Germany; he is but just returned to England, and bears letters from foreign powers to Cardinal Pole; he has promised to take me with him to London,

and to afford me the opportunity of stating to the Cardinal the inhuman act that has been practised on my sister, to plead for my father, and to endeavour to obtain his release, and permission that all our persecuted family may depart these miserable realms. This is my last, my only hope to save them."

"And is there really a ground for such a hope, that you may succeed in saving them?" replied Arabella.

"The generous friend who has undertaken my cause thinks there is a hope, a chance of success," said Edward; "since the moderation of Cardinal Pole is so obvious, that it caused him to be suspected of Lutherism, even at Rome itself."

"May God prosper your attempt!" said Arabella: "when did you say that you purpose to depart?"

"To-morrow," answered Wilford; "I would have set off instantly, but I must wait till this friend can leave Canterbury; since it is only

by his means I can obtain access to the Cardinal. You will immediately solicit your father in the behalf of my poor sister."

"Alas!" said Arabella; "now I remember me of what I had forgotten in the moment of my alarm for Rose. My father is absent at Dover, and Friar John acts for him now he is away."

"Then Rose is lost!" exclaimed Edward; "lying, as she now does, in a dungeon, without the least aid, and in her dangerous state, death must ensue; for I learned that the inflammation of her arm, in consequence of the torture, was frightfully extended. Is there no way; can nothing be done for her? I will seek Friar John and force him to set her free!"

"That would be madness," said Arabella. "He would only tell you that Rose suffered by her own obstinacy. I can do more than you could, and I dare do any thing to save her!"

"Kind, generous, dearest Arabella!" replied Edward; "how can you accomplish such a purpose?"

“I am daughter to the Sheriff of Kent,” said Arabella, “and I know a man in Canterbury, who sometimes comes to my father with the Friar. He has access at all times to the prisoners. If report speaks truth, that man, who is a lawyer, will do any thing for money. I will seek him this very day, and, if money can purchase his help, I will buy it. I will visit your poor sister in her prison, bring her thence, if it is possible, or stay there and comfort her. I will dare every peril, and every creature living, in such a cause. I am sure that my father would never countenance such cruelty to Rose Wilford.”

“I think he would not,” said Edward. “And now, Arabella, I must bid you farewell; but, ere I depart, remember your promise to me. God knows, we may never meet again; but even in death I could not resign you to such a man as Sir Francis Morgan. I knew him in France; he was the most profligate amongst the profligate,—a disgrace to the country to which he owed his birth.”

“I loathe his very name,” replied Arabella. “In obedience to my father, I have been obliged to receive him at our house ; but I will never be his wife whilst I have breath to deny him.”

“That is one drop of comfort in the bitter draught of my affliction,” said Edward, “and I thank God for it. But, are you firm ? Can you trust yourself, Arabella ?”

“I can trust myself in this,” she replied. “Here we stand, Edward, upon the very spot where my mother’s honoured remains rest in their bed of dust. In this sacred place, so hallowed by every tender recollection, I solemnly assure you, and her spirit, if it can look down on earth, I would have to bear me witness, that I will never, never be the wife of Morgan, though I should die by persecution !”

“I believe you,” said Edward ; “I can leave you with some comfort on that point. For myself, I may never live, Arabella, to claim you ; for if I fail in the effort I shall make to save my family by this address to the mercy of Car

dinal Pole, I cannot rest under my injuries, and the attempt to redress them may cost me life; and should I even escape the snares of our enemies, I have no prospects but those of an exile !”

“ You shall not speak of them now,” replied Arabella. “ The Cardinal may relent; we will hope he may. God prosper you.”

“ And you, Arabella,” said Edward; “ and may he enlighten your mind, and teach you the fallacy of a faith that seeks to find its support, not in the dictates of truth, but in the blood of the innocent.—Farewell, dearest Arabella! I know you will do all you can for Rose. May Heaven watch over you and bless you !”

Edward received the farewell of Arabella with considerable emotion. They separated at the church-porch, and Arabella hastened back to Wellminster Hall.

CHAPTER VI.

A DEADLY paleness was on the cheeks of the Lady Arabella when she entered the house-keeper's room, on her return from Wellminster Church. She threw herself into a chair, motioned Deborah to close the door, and was for some time speechless. The alarmed house-keeper again sought for drops and water, nor did Arabella refuse either. In some degree recovered from the strong emotions that had overpowered her, she suddenly rose up, threw her arms round Deborah's neck, kissed her, and burst into tears, as she exclaimed, "My dear old nurse, I have no mother, I have not a friend I can trust upon the face of the earth unless *you* will be such to me at my need, and never did a

poor creature need a friend so much as I do at this moment."

"Alack !" said Deborah, " dear young lady, I am your faithful servant, and friend too, as it pleases you to stoop to call me so ; and not all the Friar Johns in the world should make me harm a hair of your head. And as to my poor lady, your dear mother, she would have me in her dying hour to be a friend to you in a way I have never dared yet to tell of. So, you may trust me, and, God knows, I would die to serve you."

" I believe it, Deborah," replied Arabella ; " I will trust you. Make fast the door, and you shall hear all that has passed, not only this morning, but before. You shall know those precious events which are of consequence sufficient to involve the future happiness of my life."

Deborah, who most truly loved her young mistress, now entered upon the subject of her confidence with the strongest assurances of fidelity and prudence, and having secured the

lock of the door, to prevent interruption, she seated herself by Arabella's side, and gave an attentive ear to her tale. This was soon told, since her young mistress dwelt but slightly upon the previous interviews she had held with Edward Wilford before Morgan was forced upon her acceptance, and she finished her narrative with a particular account of the inhuman treatment Rose Wilford had experienced from Harpsfield and Thornton, saying, that it was in order that she might procure some aid for his unhappy sister, that had induced Edward to request that she would grant him the interview which had so lately taken place at Westminster Church.

Deborah listened with an expression of the deepest attention, and seemed to feel a lively interest in every part of her tale. She shook her head and sighed when she heard of Edward's renewed claim on the hand of Arabella; uttered a few brief exclamations of anger and indignation when she was told of Friar John's

interference with Sir Richard to advocate the cause of Morgan; looked dejected when the young lady mentioned the tomb of her mother; but when she heard of Rose's cruel sufferings, and that the poor girl was cast into a dungeon, whilst lingering under the effects of a savage torture, the old housekeeper burst into an agony of tears,—she even groaned at the recital; and suddenly throwing herself on her knees, she raised her hands and eyes to Heaven, as she exclaimed, “O Lord God, have mercy upon thy servants; do Thou arise with Thy rod and Thy scourge to cast out their cruel enemies, for the honour of Thy name, that Thy truth may appear in the sight of all men, and Thy glory be no longer concealed by these wicked followers of Satan!”

Arabella was astonished. “Deborah!” she said, “what is this I hear? for God's sake! what do you mean, tell me? Are you mad! Think, if any one should hear you, but myself.”

“I should, in that case, be known for what I

am," replied Deborah ; " I should be led to the stake. Well, God's will be done, if that must be the end of it.—I am not mad, my dear young lady ; and if I have heretofore appeared to be to others what I am not at heart, it was all along for your sake that I dissembled. I did not wish to get myself turned out of doors, in the hope that, if I stayed within them, I might one day open your eyes ; and that God would make me, as he can do, though but a simple woman, a means to confound the wise. I only stayed till a time should come to give me the occasion, and I have found it now.—Your mother, too, on her death-bed, left a solemn charge about you to me, dear young lady."

" Did she ?" said Arabella ; " I will most gladly hear it, but not now ; for I must instantly set off for Canterbury to assist poor Rose : will you go with me, Deborah ?"

" I dare not," replied the housekeeper. " If we both go, something will be suspected ; it will come to the ears of Friar John ; but if I

stay behind, I could manage to hide your absence some way or other, as you have of late shut yourself up so much in your own chamber. But how will you get into Canterbury Gaol, and without the Friar's knowing it?"

"Leave that to me, Deborah," said Arabella; "I shall take with me a purse well filled with gold, and, if I am not mistaken, that will open the gates of a prison to let me into it, though it might fail to get me out if I were a prisoner. And I know a man in Canterbury who never resists money, let who will offer it. You, Deborah, have knowledge in hurts and in medicines; you must prepare me something to apply to poor Rose's wound, and a drug proper to keep down fever."

"I have a receipt for a burn," answered Deborah, "that was used by your late mother amongst the poor; it will cure the worst burn or scald that was ever known, if applied in time. I always keep it ready prepared, to guard against accidents in the family. Gammer

Plaise even has the stuff of me for her patients in the village. And as to medicines, I have the great Doctor Butt's receipt for a fever; and you know that he was chief Physician to King Henry the Eighth; so you shall go well-furnished, and may God give a blessing to your pains!"

"I believe—I am sure he will," said Arabella; "for Rose is a most simple-hearted, good girl; and Providence will not, I trust, suffer her to sink under the hard hands of her cruel oppressors. I shall instantly set off."

"But you must not go alone," replied Deborah; "your father left you under my charge, and indeed I would not let you go out to Canterbury for a less cause than this is. I would, as it is, leave you behind, and go myself, only I am sure that I should not be able to manage to get into gaol so easily as you will. I must stay here, and somehow or other hinder its being known you are away, else Friar John would ruin me with my old master, though I

don't fear Sir Richard a pin's point, if he be left to himself. He might huff me, but I am sure he would not dare to turn me out of my place, for the sake of my long service to his late lady."

"There is not one of the servants that I dare venture to trust," said Arabella; "for they are most of them creatures that have been recommended to my father by the Friar. But I know what I will do: you, Deborah, shall lend me your sad-coloured cloak and hood,—that will quite disguise me; and so I will set off in your garments for Gammer Plaise's cottage; and blind Tommy, who can find his way to every corner of Canterbury, as well as if he had his eyes, shall be my guide and my companion; so, you find, Deborah, I shall avoid going there alone in my father's absence."

"Poor blind Tommy is not a fit person to take care of you, Mistress Arabella," said the housekeeper; "but as it is, I know of no one else who can be trusted; and he is so fond of

all Master Wilford's family, and specially of poor Mistress Rose, that he would go to the world's end to serve them."

"But hark!" cried Arabella; "what noise is that in the court-yard? Dear Deborah, do go and see;—I am sure somebody is coming into the house, and I do not wish to go to the window; since, if it should be Friar John, I will plead, what is indeed but truth, that I am too ill at ease to meet him."

"I will let you know in a minute," replied Deborah; and she left the room instantly, and soon after returned to inform Arabella that the person arrived really was the Friar, and, as ill-luck would have it, he was going to stay at the Hall till towards the evening. "I am sure it is so," said Deborah; "for I heard him tell the varlet who came with him, that he should be employed in looking out some papers in his closet here till the afternoon, and to take the horses to the stable till then, when he should want them again to go back to Canterbury."

So there is no stirring for you till he is gone away."

"How unlucky is this!" exclaimed Arabella ; "it must occasion so many hours' delay, and when Rose too is in such a state of suffering."

"God help her !" cried Deborah ; "but there is no remedy ; for, if you attempted to move from the house while the Friar is here, and he should espy you, or find it out, all would be over ; he would make use of Sir Richard's name even to lock you up, for he does what he likes with poor old master."

"It is too true, indeed," said Arabella ; "I must be patient. Do you, Deborah, let the Friar know I cannot see him. Give what orders you need in the house, that there may be no suspicion of any thing out of the common way ; then prepare what is necessary for Rose, and come back to me, and pass away the time with me till I set out, for I have now told you all my cause of unhappiness, and I cannot bear to be alone with my own thoughts, whilst I am held in this state of anxiety and suspense."

Deborah obeyed her young lady ; and after dinner was over in the family, and Friar John had shut himself into his own closet,—a place held sacred at the hall, and not to be approached without his order,—the old house-keeper returned to Arabella. She shut the door with caution.

“ There,” said Deborah, “ is a little parcel that contains all that I can think of for poor Rose. Take care of it. I have done your message to the Friar ; he is well content with it, and is going back again to Canterbury, after he has made an end of rummaging his papers. His man said in the hall, that the Friar came over to hunt out some papers of evidence, I think he called it, against some poor creatures charged with heresy, that have escaped to London. And so he is going to send up the matter of their offences to Bonner. These are terrible times ; my heart aches when I think upon them.”

“ They are terrible, indeed !” replied Arabella ; “ and, as you say, Deborah, that I must not set out till the Friar has departed, do you

employ the intermediate time by telling me what you hinted I was to learn from you respecting my mother. It will be some ease to my mind to know it, and it will take off my thoughts, though but for a while, from a subject that is terrible to my feelings during this state of suspense."

"Friar John is in the house," answered Deborah.

"Yes," said Arabella; "but you told me he was shut into his own closet; and if he is, or is not, he shall not dare to enter my chamber whilst I am in it; so I will lock the door, and then do you speak freely, and never fear any friar, either Spanish or English."

"Well, if you will take upon yourself to lock the door," said Deborah, "I have no right to hinder you, and so then I will speak."

Arabella did lock, and double lock, her chamber-door, and, drawing the housekeeper apart to the very end of the room on the opposite side, she bade her sit down and fear no-

thing, since it was impossible she could be overheard even by a listener.

Deborah began, by asking her young lady if she had the key of her mother's cabinet that stood in the room. Arabella answered, "Yes; but you know, Deborah," she continued, "my spirits have been so weak, that, though my dear mother expressly left that cabinet to me, I have never yet found the heart to examine it entirely, so that I am not acquainted with all its contents."

"But I know something of a part of them," replied the old housekeeper; "and so shall you before we part. Now attend to me, for what I have to say concerns you deeply."

"I am all attention," said Arabella; "take your own time, and tell me all I am to learn."

"I will," answered Deborah. "You must know, then, that your poor mother was, in early life, of the Reformed Church, and, as I have heard, was promised in marriage by her parents to one of their own faith. But before the

marriage was accomplished, your mother, who was very beautiful, attracted the eyes of your father, Sir Richard Southwell, and fell in love with him. On learning the truth, her first suitor gave her up to Sir Richard, and so she became his wife. Fondly attached to her husband, and considering him as a man of greater judgment than herself, she listened to his arguments, and, by his persuasion, became a member of the Romish Church."

"I have often heard as much," replied Arabella; "and I own to you, Deborah, that I have sometimes suspected my poor mother was not so entirely converted as my father would willingly believe, since she professed a great pity for the suffering Reformers, and exerted her influence with my father to do what he could to alleviate their afflictions, whilst her enlarged sense of God's mercy, and the charity of her opinions, often caused her to be reprimanded by Friar John, even in the presence of her husband.

“Your mother loved her husband, and feared the Friar,” said Deborah; “but I am sure her heart often reproached her for her desertion of the true faith. For, after my poor lady suspected that I had been worked upon to change my belief, by going so often, as I used to do at one time, to Parson Wilford’s, whilst young Master Edward, and you, Mistress Arabella, held company together, when Sir Richard was abroad, my poor lady put home-questions to me about the matter; and when I showed her how it was, and some of the books I used to keep locked up to read at whiles as I could, she shook her head, and bade me be careful how I let it be known abroad for my own sake; for my lady said, says she, ‘If Friar John should suspect what you tell me, Deborah, you are a lost woman, and I could not save you.’ And I made answer, and said, that I meant to be careful, but if the truth came out, I was ready to burn for it; and on hearing that, my lady sighed, and shook her head, and said, that was

a reproach to her, and that I had more resolution to do right than she had."

"You have surprised me, indeed!" said Arabella; "but how does this refer to what you told me my poor mother left in charge to you concerning myself?"

"You were absent in London when my poor lady was last taken sick," replied the house-keeper; "and she changed so fast, that she thought herself a-dying, and that she should be gone before your return. So, after she had talked to Sir Richard in private, what I have always thought was something about you and Master Edward, she sent for me;—I shall never forget how she looked when I came in and went to her bedside. She was sitting up, leaning on the pillows for support. Death was in her face; it was all wan and moist, and she laid her hand upon mine, as I sat down upon the bed, and it was as cold and as clammy as a corpse."

Deborah wept, whilst the mention of her

mother's last moments drew from Arabella a flood of tears, and heartfelt expressions of her regret for such a loss. The old housekeeper continued, as she wiped away the tears that flowed fast down her furrowed cheeks, " There was some flowers lying on the bed-linen, for my lady used to love them, and Sir Richard had brought her a rose or two; and she played with them in her fingers for a minute or so, as if she did not know what she was about; and then, as if some thought crossed her mind, she said to me, ' Deborah,' says she, ' these flowers will soon be withered and dead.' And I answered, ' To be sure, my lady, for they are frail things.' ' Yet,' she added, ' I shall be dead before they are—they are more lasting than my term of life.' On hearing this, I bid her to be of good heart, and not to think of dying, for fear it should hurt her spirits, but to hope for all things in God. She shook her head, and told me she knew it was so; that she could not last long; and then she talked

of you, Mistress Arabella, and feared she should be gone before you could reach her ; and though there was not a tear in her eye before, she cried, as fast as I do now, at the thoughts about her child."

"She was speechless when I reached the Hall," said Arabella, weeping. "Oh, I shall never forget how she fixed her dying eyes upon me ; how she wrung my hand within her cold grasp, till her own fell motionless in death. It was a sight to melt the hardest heart ; I cannot bear to think of it."

"Be composed, dear young lady !" replied Deborah, "she is happy. Let me tell you what she said to me about you, before your return. 'Deborah,' continued my lady, 'you have sense and prudence beyond your condition.' I told her she was very good to think so. 'My conscience reproaches me,' she added, 'for the easy compliance I have made, out of love to my husband, in matters of faith ; and I fear that I am guilty of a great sin in bring-

ing up my daughter in a Church, in the truth of which I never entirely believed; but Arabella is not bigoted, like her poor father,' (those were her very words,) 'and I am sure,' she said, 'my child would listen to reason, and examine the truth, if she was put in the right way. Still, I know how dangerous are these times, and how angry her father would be, if she changed. But I am a dying woman, and I must not fear man before God. Do nothing hastily, Deborah, but watch a proper opportunity, and then tell my child my last words, and bid her acquaint herself with a book that I have left in the cabinet that I made you remove into her chamber. I hope she will then learn to worship God, and to believe in Him, as you and I do, Deborah, without bigotry or superstition.'"

"What was the book my poor mother so much recommended to my notice?" inquired Arabella.

"It is 'Tindal's Christian Obedience,'"

plied the housekeeper, “and there it lies in that cabinet, with many another good book of the like sort; and if Friar John knew such books were there, he would burn them with his own hand, and me too, for telling you about them.—Now, dear young lady, you know all; you know what I am; and if you should betray me, it will cost me my life.”

“I will never be so wicked,” said Arabella; “no, though I should fail to alter my opinions by the means my poor mother has directed; yet, I will not betray you to a cruel death. It was the persecution of these innocent people, that the Friar and my father call heretics, that first made me doubt the truth of a Church that could enjoin such savage deeds as acts of duty acceptable to Heaven.”

“But you will read the books?” said Deborah.

“Yes,” replied Arabella, “when my mind is more composed; but now I am too distracted in thought to be capable of understanding them.—Do, Deborah, descend into the hall, and

see if there is any likelihood of the Friar's departure; for I am impatient to set out to Canterbury, and the evening will soon be drawing on."

The housekeeper obeyed, and returned with the joyful intelligence, that in less than half-an-hour the Friar would be gone. The extreme impatience of Arabella, during this interval, was somewhat diverted from its object, though by the renewal of a subject painful to her feelings, since the housekeeper again returned to the mention of her departed mistress, with that warm affection so creditable to her feelings.

"I remember my dear mother well," said Arabella; (as Deborah dwelt, with pleasure, upon some particular recollection of her person;) "since her death, I have often had her before my eyes."

The housekeeper probably understood this expression in its literal meaning, as she hastily exclaimed, "Have you, indeed! Why, then, I suppose, what people say is true?"

"What is true?" inquired Arabella; "and

what is said? I don't understand you, Deborah."

"I thought," replied the old woman, "that you said, but just now, you had often had my poor lady before your eyes since her death!"

"Yes," said Arabella; "but I spoke of the perfect remembrance that I have of her beloved features; I can never forget them; for surely, she looked more like what we fancy in a blessed spirit than a mere mortal. I never saw such a benevolent expression, such sweetness, as shone forth in every line of my dear mother's face."

"Then you have not heard what people say?" continued Mistress Deborah.

"Why, what should they say?" replied Arabella; "surely, no one would be so unjust to cast a word of censure on my poor mother's memory."

"No, no; not that," said the housekeeper; "I am almost afraid to tell you. But people do say that she walks."

“ Walks !” exclaimed Arabella, in a tone of surprise.

“ Ay ; they do say, that her spirit is disturbed by something, and that she may be seen at a particular hour. Truly, I can vouch thus much, that when I was called to her, not long before she died, as I told you just now, she did ask me what it was o’clock. I answered, that it was about five of the clock. And on hearing it, my poor lady cried out, ‘ *Not eight o’clock !* not eight o’clock yet ! how long the day seems. I thought it had been near spent. Not eight o’clock yet !’ and so she kept on ; and truly, as the clock struck eight, the spirit fled the body ?”

“ I know my dear mother died at that hour ; and, as I remember, Deborah, it was on a fine autumn evening, like this.”

“ It was,” replied Deborah ; “ and, having said so much, I will tell you more. Come to the window. You see that pathway that leads down towards the Park ?”

“ And which crosses near the summer-house,

that was built by my dear mother's desire, and that we used to call hers," said Arabella. "I know it well, and many a melancholy hour have I past there since her death."

"Yes," answered Deborah; "and about the hour of eight in the evening, if it is gloomy, people do say, that Lady Southwell has been seen to walk there since her death."

Arabella shook her head: "I do not believe it," she said: "I do not believe, when the spirit is called home to the bosom of its Maker, that God would permit it again to revisit this world of sin and sorrow. You are superstitious, Deborah; although you have taken up a new faith that denounces all superstition."

"I am not so, I assure you," answered Deborah. "But one evening, when I was very sad, I thought I would go to the old summer-house, where I used so often to attend my poor lady. And as I drew near it, I changed my mind, for the evening was dreary, and I heard the great bell in the clock-house strike eight."

I was turning back, when on a sudden I heard such a rustling amongst the leaves, and such a sound ! I am sure it was a sigh or a groan, for I was too frightened to tell which ; and I turned my head, and then only think what I saw !”

“ Not my mother !” exclaimed Arabella eagerly, who was now infected with old Deborah’s fears. “ Good Heaven !—Speak !—What was it ?”

“ I certainly saw something,” replied the housekeeper ; “ and wrapped, too, in a large cloak ; and it glided away, and was gone as I looked round.”

“ Did you not speak ?” inquired Arabella. “ It might have been some one from the village. You should have spoken.”

“ Who, I ?” cried Deborah. “ God forbid that I, sinner as I am, should speak to a spirit ! I ran away as fast as my old legs could carry me ; and I thought I should have dropped before I got to the house.”

“ When was this ?” inquired Arabella.

“ I fear to tell you,” replied the housekeeper.

“ But, indeed, it was only last night.”

“ It might have been one of the servants, who wished to frighten you,” said Arabella.

“ For my own part, my dear mother loved me too well to injure me either living or dead. I think that I should not fear to see her.”

“ Do not say so. It is presumptuous,” cried the old housekeeper. “ But I hear the hall-door close;—and look! yonder goes Friar John. He turns his horse’s head for the road to Canterbury. Now hasten—get yourself ready. Give the Friar a quarter of an hour, in order to be sure that he is off, and then do you set out for the cottage of Gammer Plaise. Tommy will be your guide, and God will bless the good act you go to do for poor Rose.”

“ If my father should hear of my visit to the prison before he learns it from me, I will take care that you, Deborah, shall not suffer for

letting me go out in his absence. I shall not, I fear, return till late, having been so long delayed by the visit of the Friar to the Hall. But do not be alarmed ; the man that I shall bribe to get me into Canterbury Castle, shall find some one to guard me home, unless he will do it himself. I know I can buy his silence ; and he fears my father too much to neglect my safety. You will take care to let me in, as you agreed, by the little private door that leads into your apartments."

" Yes, yes, I shall be on the watch," replied Deborah. " I shall have no peace till I see you return. I must go down and let you out by that door now. All the servants are in the common hall ; for they are making merry to-day, as I gave them leave in my master's absence. In my sad-coloured cloak and hood, I am sure they will not know you, if they should see you from the windows. And as to Master, if he finds it out afterwards, I don't

much care ; for he knows my value too well to turn me away, and that, too, for letting you do a charitable action to poor Rose Wilford."

It may seem surprising that Deborah should have been so easy about transgressing the orders she had received respecting the security of Arabella ; but the truth was, she little feared her master. Sir Richard Southwell was kind and indulgent to his servants ; as such, though greatly beloved, he was not feared by any of them ; so that they did not scruple to take many liberties, and often even to contradict his orders, secure of escaping, in case of detection, on the easy terms of a slight reprimand.

Arabella put on the cloak and hood, secured the little parcel for Rose, and, bidding adieu to Deborah, stole out of the house in the manner already concerted, and set forward on her way to the village of Wellminster.

CHAPTER VII.

IT now was nearly the end of autumn, and though the weather was fine when Arabella commenced her walk, yet the mists of the approaching evening were already gathering around, and the melancholy cadence of the wind, as it rustled through the branches of the trees, now partially dismantled of their foliage, and the rustling of the leaves beneath her feet, often made Arabella start with nervous apprehension, as she sometimes fancied she heard other footsteps than her own in the woods, or in pursuit of her. In spite of her better judgment, the conversation she had so lately held with Deborah dwelt upon her mind; she could not dismiss it; and, by one of those un-

accountable, and yet contradictory moods of feeling, that sometimes influence our actions, whilst they are condemned by our reason, she felt a strange desire, as she approached the little pathway that led to the summer-house, to turn down it, and to leave the Park in that direction towards the village. But remembering, that should she do so, her walk would necessarily become lengthened, and speed was now her object, she checked this strange desire, and continued to advance on the road that lay before her.

She had scarcely walked forward a few paces, when she distinctly heard a rustling amongst the trees that were near the skirts of the pathway she was pursuing. Her blood chilled in her veins when she remembered the words of Deborah, and she uttered an involuntary shriek, as a figure, wrapped in a mantle, with the head and face so completely shaded as to be concealed from observation, issued from the wood, and standing before her in the very

centre of the track, rendered it impossible that she should pass on. Arabella stopped, terror closed her lips, she could not utter another sound; but the figure, in a voice perfectly human, though not at all harmonious, spoke the following words: "Don't be chicken-hearted, but stop five minutes, and hear what I have got to say."

Arabella's fears found instant relief by the dissipation of a superstitious dread that, in despite of common sense, had stolen upon her; yet still unable to speak, she stood trembling and almost breathless, as the muffled man, for a man it was, thus continued:—"You are the daughter of Sir Richard Southwell?"

"Yes, yes;" Arabella replied in a tremulous voice, and, scarcely knowing what she said, added, "I beseech you to let me pass on."

"You will not be for passing on so quickly, when you hear what I have to tell you," said the man; "the scent lies another way."

"I—I don't understand you," answered

Arabella ; “ I—I am going back to the house.”

“ Then you are going in a strange road for it,” continued the intruder ; “ but don’t fear me, as I said before ; I know what game you are about to put up ; you are off to Canterbury, after Rose Wilford. I tell you so, to let you see that I am in the secret.”

Arabella was perfectly astonished, and stood silent, not daring to answer, lest she should betray herself.

“ Tell me one thing,” continued her tormentor ; “ would you save *Edward Wilford* ?”

“ Edward Wilford !” exclaimed Arabella ; “ he is in no danger, I trust.”

“ Is he not ?” said the man in an ironical tone ; “ he will be glad, I fancy, if you can make that appear to-morrow morning.”

“ What do you mean ?” cried Arabella ; “ speak plainly, I beseech you.”

“ All I want to know,” said the man, “ is, do you wish to do him a good turn ?—in short, would you wish to keep his head on his shoulders ?”

“ Gracious Heaven !” again exclaimed Arabella ; “ speak plainly ; how can I comprehend these dark words, and spoken in so strange a manner, and by one to whom I am a perfect stranger ? tell me more, or I cannot credit your assertions.”

“ If you want to know more,” said the man,—
“ to know all, be so good as to walk down the pathway into yonder summer-house, *there* a person is now waiting on purpose to tell you the matter.”

“ Comes that person from Edward Wilford ?” inquired Arabella.

“ No matter for that,” replied the man ;
“ you may do as you like, go or stay, that’s not my business : all that I have to say is this, that if you do *not* go, you will hear soon enough that Edward Wilford is a dead man,—his crowing will be stopped, I promise you—that’s all, and so I wish you a good evening.” And without staying to hear Arabella’s answer, the muffled informer struck down an opposite path, left Arabella free to act as she pleased, and in

a few minutes was lost to her sight amidst the intricacy of the wood.

The extraordinary language of the man convinced Arabella that he was no gentleman ; and yet, as he had left her so perfectly at liberty, to choose her own course, after this singular information, she did not think he could be a ruffian that designed her any ill. She had no fears of a personal nature ; and the thought flashed across her mind, that Harpsfield, in revenge for Edward Wilford's conduct on hearing of the inhuman treatment that wretch had shown to his sister, might meditate some plan of destruction for the brother. . Perhaps some friend of Edward's was now waiting to disclose to her the design. This conjecture was highly improbable ; but Arabella was too much distressed to think clearly ; and, without pausing another moment, she rushed on towards the summer-house in the Park. She reached it, the door was half open, yet no one could be seen. She entered, and a person standing near, but behind

the door, instantly closed it with violence, and secured it by the bolt. Arabella looked up and beheld—Sir Francis Morgan.

He attempted to lead her to a seat. “I am betrayed!” exclaimed the affrighted Arabella. “This is an artifice. Unbar the door; let me out, Sir; this moment let me pass; I insist upon it; you have no right to detain me; my father shall know of this conduct.—Unbar the door!”

For some time Sir Francis Morgan allowed her to vent her feelings of indignation at his conduct: he then said calmly, “I have no intention to detain you, Lady Arabella; I wish to speak with you for a few minutes; and you shall then leave me, if such should be your pleasure, for *ever*.”

“If it was your purpose, Sir Francis, only to tell me that,” replied Arabella, “you might have done so without entrapping me to hear it, since you must know how agreeable the intelligence would be to me.”

“I should have told you so at the Hall,”

said Morgan, "but during Sir Richard's absence I am denied all access; and it has become absolutely necessary that what I have to communicate should be made known to you this evening."

"Be brief, Sir, I beg," replied Arabella, "for the sooner we part the better."

"And I am entirely of that opinion," said Morgan; "I think we perfectly understood each other at our last meeting."

"Perfectly," replied Arabella; "I have nothing more to say on that subject."

"You are determined, then," continued Sir Francis, "that when it comes to the point, you will never give yourself to me as my wife."

"Never!" said Arabella in a firm voice.

"And you do not deny, what I have at length learned, even from Friar John, to be true, that your affections are Edward Wilford's; and that you consider your contract to him still binding, though it has been annulled by the Legate."

“You gained a confirmation of the truth from me by artifice,” replied Arabella ; “but I will not retract my words, nor utter falsehood ; and if you knew this already, it needed not that I should repeat it now.”

“There you are mistaken,” said Morgan, “since it is on account of that very affection, which you acknowledge you feel for Edward Wilford, that I am now about to save his life, out of pure kindness to you.”

“This is inexplicable,” said Arabella ; “I cannot credit any professions of a generous conduct on your part after all that has passed, unless you give me the most undeniable proofs of your sincerity.”

“I came prepared to do so,” replied Sir Francis ; “my only fear was, that I should not obtain an interview with you before it was too late for me to act in his behalf. You freely avow that the life of Edward Wilford is dear to you, and that you would gladly become the means of assisting me in its preservation.”

“That point is already answered,” said Arabella in a low voice, and somewhat hesitating as she spoke; “be pleased to proceed to your communication, since I must insist upon your detaining me here as short a time as is possible.”

“Undoubtedly,” answered Sir Francis; “and be assured, that though I might feel sorry for the fate that is impending over the head of so near a relative as Edward Wilford, nothing but my unbounded love for you, my desire to save you the agony of hearing of his death, could have caused me to do what I am now about to do—to offer to save him. I solemnly assure you, and I shall produce the proofs, that *all* depends upon yourself. One word of yours may save him.”

“Of mine!” exclaimed Arabella: “Good Heaven! can this be true? Speak in plain terms, I beseech you. Is it really true?”

“I swear to you,” said Morgan, “upon this sacred emblem of our faith,” (and he drew a cross from his bosom as he spoke,)—“I solemnly

swear, that what I utter is as true as that faith which this token enjoins. You *have* the power to save, or to destroy, Edward Wilford."

"I destroy him!" cried Arabella, with considerable warmth,—for her strong sense of feeling was seldom repressed by motives of prudence;—"I would more willingly destroy myself."

"I judged it was so," said Morgan; "and therefore I felt confident, that though the means by which I have obtained this interview might seem offensive, yet you would pardon them when you knew the cause. Here are proofs that must convince you;" and he drew forth a few papers. "Be pleased, Lady Arabella, to read that statement,—it is legally drawn up; and then you shall peruse this letter, which is but *one* evidence out of many in my possession as to its truth."

Arabella took the statement (which was brief), and hastily read it. In doing so, she became greatly agitated, and her hands trem-

bled so much with emotion, that she could scarcely conclude the task. On finishing the perusal, she exclaimed, "Gracious Heaven! can this be true? Can Edward Wilford thus—unwarily, I am sure it must be—have exposed his life? Could he hold intercourse with a traitor? I—I cannot believe it."

"You have yet only read the statement," said Morgan; "be pleased to glance your eye upon the letter, that is in his own hand; and it is but one out of many addressed by Edward Wilford to Sir Thomas Wyatt, lately executed for high treason."

Arabella read the letter, dropped it on the ground in her extreme agitation, and could only say, in a voice scarcely articulate, "*Have you all these letters?*"

"I have," replied Morgan.

"Then, destroy them!" cried Arabella. "Do that, and you will save Edward,—you will be generous, indeed."

"And you will thank me," said Sir Francis,

“ for thus becoming a party concerned in sheltering a traitor to my Queen ; by never seeing me more ; by casting me off, and by wedding with that traitor ; the heretic, the detested rival, who has ruined my hopes of happiness before my face. I love you too well, Lady Arabella, to be capable of such an heroic sacrifice, for which I should most deservedly rank the first amongst fools.”

“ You will not destroy the letters, then ?” replied Arabella : “ you said, but now, that it required but a word of mine to save Edward from this danger, and I have spoken that word. I speak it again ; destroy them, and save a brave man from a cruel death. I am sure Edward was no traitor to his country ; for, you see, even in that letter, he talks only of taking up arms to guard the life of the Princess Elizabeth.”

“ He does so,” said Morgan ; “ and talks, likewise, of spending the last drop of his blood in her defence, and in support of her rights ; gives the name of *murder* to the sentence by

which the Lady Jane met her death ; calls Mary of England blood-thirsty ; Bonner a savage ; and the Church of Rome the Anti-christ of the Prophet. Doubtless, these things will not be considered at all treasonable in one of her Grace's courts, or with the members of the Star-Chamber."

" Cold, unfeeling man," said Arabella, " how can you speak thus tauntingly of what must affect your kinsman's life ? Once more, I beseech you to destroy the papers ; or, if you fear to do it, give them all to me,—I will destroy them, and take upon myself whatever consequences may follow : I will begin with this letter ;" and, as she spoke, she stooped to pick it up ; Morgan interrupted her purpose, and secured it.

" I have not said, that I will *not* destroy them," he replied ; " but I must annex one condition to the act, if I give my consent for their destruction."

" Speak it," cried Arabella, " and if all that

I possess on earth, either now, or in time to come, must be the price;—if that can satisfy you, I will not hesitate a moment to comply with your demand.”

“ My demand is not so low and grovelling as you would imply, Lady,” said Sir Francis haughtily. “ I am not to be bought by a price; or rather, let me say, I am only to be bought by what is beyond all price—by yourself. Give me yourself, Arabella, and though, by protecting Wilford, I should lay my own head in danger of the axe, I *will* save him.”

“ Base-minded, selfish man,” replied Arabella; “ could you be so mean to urge me to give you my hand, now that you have discovered the truth, that my affections are given to another? Would you have me despise you for making use of that very knowledge, to act upon my feelings, to preserve the man I love, in order to give myself to one I hold in contempt—whom I could hate, but that hatred is a sin?”

“ You will not consent to the terms, then ? ”
said Morgan.

“ Never ! ” she exclaimed, with great vehemence. “ I would rather see Edward Wilford dead ! ”

“ Then you shall be gratified,” cried Morgan. “ This night the warrant, already prepared for his detention, shall be put in execution ; and to-morrow he will be conveyed to London. The Tower and the block both follow : for, who can even, in our days, fancy the one separated from the other ? I will now open the door of the pleasure-house. I promised not to detain you.” He advanced towards it as he spoke, still watching the countenance of Arabella, to take advantage of the least hesitation that might appear in her.

“ Do not go,” she said ;—“ You shall not go. Morgan, be generous. Do an act but of common humanity, and I will be bound to you in gratitude for ever.”

“ I love you,” said Morgan, endeavouring to

cloak his shameless cruelty under an appearance of passionate affection,—“ I love you to madness ; and rather than see you live to be the wife of Wilford, I would cast down my own life as freely as I would his. I cannot save the man who would afterwards be yours.”

“ If that is the objection,” replied Arabella, “ I will promise—nay, I will swear, if there is no other way to save him, that I never will be his ! You can preserve his life,—you must do it,—you cannot be so cruel.”

“ I *could* save him,” said Morgan, “ since I hold the evidence that must convict him ; and I could also, as well as my follower, Samuel Collins, become an evidence against him ; for we were both acquainted with some of his transactions with Sir Thomas Wyatt ; and even our own safety demands that we should not connive at them, more especially as the law is now up in arms to detect every man but suspected of treason, since the dangerous attempt made by Stafford to renew rebellion in this kingdom.”

“ Stafford was an exile,” observed Arabella, “ and landed on our coasts supported by a foreign power.”

“ And on that very account Wilford would be held the more dangerous; since he, too, has been an exile, and in a country adverse to our government at home.”

“ You will save Edward, then,” continued Arabella, “ if I solemnly promise never to become his?”

“ No !” exclaimed Morgan. “ I should, in that case, have but the miserable satisfaction of knowing that you were not his. But I have bolder hopes—a higher aim. I love you, Arabella. Your father has sanctioned our union. I will have no half-measures. Give me yourself, or this hour we part for ever. The choice is yours. Will you be mine?”

“ Never ! never !” said Arabella.

“ Then let the law take its course,” replied Sir Francis. “ Your father shall know of this treatment.”

“ My father would despise you,” cried Arabella: “ for, blinded as he is by his unhappy prejudices and the influence of Friar John, still he would never sanction your conduct to me this day. Did he know the terms upon which you won my consent, he would reject you for being capable of using them.”

“ But you would not dare to reveal to him the transaction of this evening,” said Sir Francis, with a cool effrontery of manner that greatly incensed Arabella.

“ What !” she exclaimed in a tone of indignation, “ I would not dare to tell him—I would not ? The first words that pass my lips when I once more meet my father shall be to tell him what *you* have dared to do,—have dared to propose. My father shall know you for what you are,—a villain !”

“ Tell him so, by all means,” said Sir Francis ; “ and see if even my consent to save Edward would avail. Sir Richard Southwell conceals nothing from his spiritual director, Friar John ;

and, where a matter of treason against the Queen was in question, he would not be scrupulous in revealing it. Judge, then, how long it would be ere that zealous Romish priest delayed to communicate the tale of Edward Wilford's conduct to the Queen and Council."

Arabella was struck by these words ; she was silent, for she could not deny their truth.

"I believe you will now admit," continued Sir Francis, "that when I said you would not dare to repeat to your father the subject of our interview this evening, I did but speak what was sooth."

"Cruel, cold-hearted man !" said Arabella, and she burst into tears ; "you have laid a toil for me at every turn, so that I may not escape the nets you have spread for my destruction."

"You will leave me?" replied Morgan ; "you will pronounce the doom of Edward as irrevocable?"

"Heavens !" exclaimed Arabella, "would you force me to become perjured?"

“I force you to do nothing,” said Morgan calmly; “I leave you to your own free will; but ere you determine, I thought it but right you should clearly understand the terms upon which we part.”

Arabella, whose first ebullition of justly provoked feeling had subsided, seemed now overwhelmed with sorrow at the thoughts of Edward’s danger, and at the dreadful alternative which lay before her, till a deep sense of horror, excited by the shameless cruelty of Morgan, (so perfectly in character with the times in which he lived,) appeared at once to possess her, and rushing towards the entry, she exclaimed, as she laid her hand upon the lock, and shook it violently, in her effort to burst open the door, “I will appeal to my father, I will tell him all, and trust to his feelings, as a father, as a man, that I may not be thus sacrificed.”

“You forget,” said Sir Francis, as he gently removed her hand from the lock, and contrived to place himself so as to stand between Arabella

and the door,—“you forget, in your distraction, that I told you, before to-morrow morning, Edward Wilford would be a prisoner. Your father is absent at Dover;—I bid you farewell.”

“I am distracted, indeed,” cried Arabella; “you have worked my mind to frenzy; but you shall not pass out to execute your cruel purpose. Oh, Morgan, I will sue even to you, I will kneel at your feet, and beg you, in mercy to yourself, as you one day hope to find mercy at your need, that you will show it to your unhappy kinsman. Think what are his sorrows: his father is lingering in a prison; his mother lies on the bed of death; his innocent sister is cast into a dungeon, whilst the agonies of a savage torture are yet upon her.”

“And to-morrow morning,” added Morgan artfully, “Edward was to have set off for London, in company with some powerful friend, to plead to the Cardinal to obtain mercy for his afflicted family, to save them all. Who, then, is *his* enemy?—Arabella. Who will prevent him

from saving his father?—Arabella. Who but Arabella consigns the mother, the sister, yea himself, to death?—who but she, when but a word might rescue him?—who does this?”

Arabella wrung her hands with agony, as the tears ran down her cheeks, and convulsive sobs burst from her bosom. Morgan saw the effect he had produced upon her feelings, and thus continued:—“Edward might save them all, should he have access to the Cardinal. It is most likely he would do so; for Pole is so adverse to the sanguinary system of these times, that he would rejoice, when personally solicited, to interfere to do an act of mercy. It is to be expected, therefore, that Edward might save his family from ruin. But if *he*, too, is arrested, accused of treason, and cast into a prison, he can do nothing; he lies there by Arabella’s will. Then will it be Arabella who leads the old man to the stake, who renders the last hours of his life bitter to him. It will be Arabella who destroys the miserable Alice; who leaves Rose

to perish in a dungeon, or to the mercy of a wretch, who has already withered her hand, and who will ultimately wither her whole body in the fiery sacrifice of faith. It will be Arabella alone who drags Edward Wilford to the block, and there leaves his corpse a headless trunk !”

“ Hold, hold !” cried Arabella, “ you will drive me mad. Hear me, Morgan, and heed me. If my words, or my actions, are as reckless as your own, remember, you are yourself the cause of both. You have played upon my feelings, you have goaded me to frēnzy.—What conduct would you expect from me, should I consent to be your wife ?”

“ What conduct ?” said Morgan—“ what I should deserve ; for I cannot think the perfect love, the devoted affection that I feel for you, could be returned by a mind so generous in other than in kind acknowledgments.—I will await the events of time, and the efforts of my own sincere devotion to your happiness, to win an interest in your heart.”

“ You will never find it,” replied Arabella :

“Look upon me, Morgan ; we both stand in the presence of God, who reads the secrets of all hearts ; and He knows full well that you can never find a place in mine. Your cruel and unmanly treatment of me this hour, in making me arbiter either to destroy the innocent friends so dear to me, or myself, is an act that must render you for ever hateful in my eyes. And the meanness of spirit which you betray, in showing you could accept the hand of any woman, were she the greatest that ever walked God’s earth, on terms like these, must make me hold you in contempt. Would you then, knowing that such must be the feelings with which I shall ever view you,—would you take me on such terms as these ?”

“I will take you on any terms,” replied the mean and wretched man ; “I would trust to time, to my own conduct, to hope, for a change of feeling in one I so adore. Do you consent ?”

“Can no other conditions move you ?” inquired Arabella.

“None, so help me Heaven !” answered Mor-

gan in a determined tone. "If you refuse, Edward dies."

Arabella stood like a statue, her countenance blank with horror, as she said, in a voice deep and emphatic, from the intense agony of her feelings, "Give me the papers, and whilst I destroy them, hear me vow the sacrifice of —of myself!"

"No," said Morgan; "when you *are* mine, I will destroy them; but till then they rest with me as my security. Pardon me, I cannot place my happiness in the power even of your faith; for, though I do not doubt it, there may be others that might induce you to revoke your promise."

"Infamous man!" exclaimed Arabella, "then I see this is but a shallow artifice to deceive me; you would gain me, and still retain within your own hands the means to destroy your kinsman. I will not trust you."

"Hear me!" cried Morgan.

"I will not hear you!" continued Arabella

vehemently ; “ I will proclaim your infamy to my father, to the whole world, whatever be the consequence. And I do not hesitate to tell you, that I have a suspicion your hatred to Edward Wilford is founded on something more than the jealousy of a rival, or a zeal for the Queen’s cause :—it is the love of gold ; it is for gold you would sell your kinsman’s blood, and then step into his place.”

“ I beseech you to hear me,” said Sir Francis.

But Arabella heeded not the interruption, and thus spoke on : “ You are the next heir, were Edward Wilford no more, to old Sir John Mordaunt’s lands. Take heed, I beseech you, how you tamper with your own soul. The innocent blood that is spilt to render worldly profit to you, shall call upon you for the payment of an awful debt hereafter—the forfeit of eternity.”

“ I will meet the demand, and never fear it,” said Morgan, with the utmost effrontery. “ I conjure you to hear me but one word ; consent

to be mine, and the hour that makes you such, shall consign those writings to destruction ; and I will swear never to injure so much as a wandering hair upon the head of Edward Wilford, though he is my greatest enemy."

"Your oath would be worthless," cried Arabella ; "it would be as easily wafted away by the first gust of angry passions, as these withered Autumn leaves are scattered by the rude breath of heaven."

"Nay, I will trebly swear," said Sir Francis, "by all that is feared now, or hoped hereafter, I will swear to—"

"I would not rely upon an oath of yours," said Arabella, "no, not for the security of the meanest thing on earth, far less for the life of the man you profess to hate. Had you really wished to save him, even by your own base means, you would have destroyed those papers, when, appalled by fear, I offered to sacrifice myself as the price of their destruction. But do not talk of oaths, at a moment when you would

have called on God to witness a compact that he must have held accursed ; a mockery of the holiest vows ; an abuse of the dearest bond of social life. Unbar the door and give me passage, or I will appeal to the laws of my country to redress this insult."

"You will not consent then," said Morgan ; "you refuse my terms; you pronounce the doom of Wilford?"

"I pronounce your doom," replied Arabella, "by the witness of God's word, I pronounce it ! The man of blood shall be requited with blood. If you pursue your design to take away the life of your unoffending kinsman, you are lost for ever—you are a murderer !"

Morgan's countenance became flushed with the ungovernable violence of his passions, as Arabella thus forcibly and justly accused him : he fixed his eye upon her for a moment, and said, in a stern and menacing manner, "You will give him up to my power, then?"

"You have no power over him," replied

Arabella, "I will trust to God for his security."

"Do it," said Morgan sternly, "and see if He will save him. You will not consent to my terms to save the blood that must be spilt?"

"Never!" exclaimed Arabella; "I will dare the consequence. To consent to any terms with such a mind as yours, hardened in hypocrisy, and reckless in guilt, would be vain. I should be sacrificed, and those I would preserve be nothing spared. I can read all your falsehood: your very looks condemn you; you dared not look me in the face whilst you proposed your villany."

"But I dare execute it," said Morgan, "if it be villany. To-morrow morning shall convince you of that; to-morrow I will be satisfied, and Wilford dies."

Sir Francis Morgan instantly unbarred the door, rushed from the summer-house, whilst Arabella stood gazing after him, her whole frame still agitated by the violence of those con-

tending and irritating feelings that had been called up during the late scene.

For some time she seemed scarcely conscious where she was, or of her own purpose, but remained fixed and motionless on the very spot where Morgan had burst from her. At length a sudden recollection appeared to rush upon her mind, and she exclaimed, “Yes, I may yet save him; I will instantly seek Edward Wilford; I will tell him all; he may this night fly from Canterbury; he may escape the toils this wretch has spread for his destruction:—some spirit of a higher world than this has surely suggested the thought—I will obey the suggestion. God calls me to his deliverance,—I will dare all to do it.”

Without pausing another moment for farther deliberation, Arabella instantly quitted the summer-house, passed the Park with surprising rapidity, gained the village, and rushed into the cottage of old Gammer Plaise. The surprise that it produced must be told in the next chapter.

CHAPTER VIII.

AS Arabella burst into the cottage, in a manner so different to that with which she had hitherto visited the dwellings of the poor, an old man, who stood talking to Blind Tommy in a tone of condolence, for the lad was weeping bitterly, exclaimed, "The Lord help us! why, what mad queen have we here?"

"I am mad, indeed!" said Arabella; and then, as if recollecting herself, she added with more composure, "I have been greatly alarmed in the Park."

"The Lord bless you! is it you?" cried the old man: "Good lack, my Lady Arabella, I didn't know you, when you came in, in such a way as almost to knock me down, as I

stood near the door ;” and he doffed his cap respectfully as he spoke, and showed a head covered with a few thin locks of silvery whiteness.

“ I am sorry,” said Arabella, “ that I should have alarmed you, but I have been frightened in my way hither—I—”

“ I suppose, then, you met the men in charge of the prisoner,” continued the white-headed villager.

“ What men?—what prisoner?—have they taken him?” inquired Arabella eagerly, and with almost breathless anxiety.

“ They have taken poor old granny,” said Tommy,

“ Thank Heaven !” exclaimed Arabella, greatly relieved from the apprehension which she had instantly conceived that it must be Edward Wilford who was mentioned as a prisoner.

“ That is not kind, to thank Heaven that granny is taken away ; and for you, too, my Lady, to say so, when poor granny used to

be so fond of you," said Tommy, in a peevish tone, as he sobbed his reproaches to Arabella.

"You mistake me, poor child," she replied : "I am not so wicked to thank Heaven that your grandmother should be in trouble ; I came to speak with her."

"But you'll never speak with her here again, Lady, I fear," said the boy ; "those wicked men have taken her away for a heretic and a witch, and I am sure I can't tell what they mean ; for granny used to read the Bible, and say her prayers, and cure the sick folks, and the cows too, and that's all the harm that ever she did in her life ; as Gaffer Turf there knows well enough, if he will speak the truth, like an honest man."

Arabella wished to get rid of the old man, but she did not know how to do it to avoid exciting suspicion.

"Ay, ay," said old Turf, the Sexton of Wellminster ; "I believe Gammer Plaise was a good woman, for all that's come and gone yet ; thof some folks would have it that she

had an evil eye; thof, for my part, I always said, says I, she has no more an evil eye than her betters. But she is old, and her eye, like every body else's, will blink with old age, if they live to make old bones; and the bell don't toll for them, as it often does for many a younger one; for a fresh cheek and a bright eye as often come to the ground, as those that are withered by age,—but these are miserable times.”

“ They are miserable, indeed,” said Arabella: “ and what, my poor boy, will become of you? why are you left behind?”

“ They would not let me go with granny,” answered Tommy, “ though I wanted to go to comfort her; and they said, though I was blind, and couldn't see the devil when granny raised him, yet I might be one of his imps, and help her to bring him up, for all that; and so I was left behind.”

“ And what will you do, my poor child?” repeated Arabella.

“ What will I do?” cried Tommy; “ why,

Lady, I will do as the poor birds did, when the wicked boys in the village wrung the old one's neck,—I will droop and die; for I am blind, and I have not a friend on earth."

"But you have a friend in Heaven, my dear child," said Arabella, "and He has promised never to desert the orphan: and I hope you have a friend on earth too; I will be such to you."

"No, no," said Tommy, "don't mind me; but if you can, do be granny's friend, for I am afraid the wicked men will burn her."

"Burn her!" cried old Gaffer Turf; "it would be a shameful thing if they did: but to see now these times, they ruin every honest man; they burn so many, it is a great hurt to trade. By and by, I suppose, they will be for burning every body, and so leave nobody to be buried at all. I might as well use my spade to dig in a marl-pit, for what it is good for in my hands; we have scarce a corpse comes to ground, they carry so many

to the stake. And even when they are buried they will not let folks rest in their graves, but dig them up and burn them too, as they did Peter Martyr's wife at Oxford.* A woodcutter and a faggot-binder is a craft worth ten of a sexton's calling, now-a-days,—these are miserable times.”

“ They are indeed, and fraught with wretchedness,” said Arabella. “ I remember you now, friend,—you are Gaffer Turf, the old sexton. I—I think you allowed Master Edward Wilford to have the key of the church this morning ; did you not ?”

The old man put his finger to his nose, as he said in a low voice, “ Not a word of that ; I love Master Edward and all his family well enough ; but, you know,” and he winked his eye significantly, “ I didn't let *him* have the key neither, thof I let Tommy have it, because,

* At Oxford, the bones of Peter Martyr's wife were dug up by order of the Legate Cardinal Pole, and buried in a dunghill.

thof he is blind, he loves to be running his fingers over the organ, when he can get anybody to blow the bellows ; so, you see, all was right,—I only lent the key to Tommy.”

“ But you knew who I wanted it for, I am sure, Gaffer,” said Tommy ; “ for Master Edward didn’t give you a silver sixpence for letting me play the organ this morning.”

“ Hold your tongue, you young rogue,” cried old Turf ; “ I let you have the key, and so I told the gentleman who was spying hereabouts to-day. I told him it was for you to go into the church to play to the Lady Arabella.

“ To me ?” exclaimed Arabella. “ Why did you mention me ?”

“ Because the gentleman rated me for letting strangers have the key of Friar John’s new church. And he said he was sure it was for Master Wilford, for that he saw him go down the green lane and steal into the church, and so he came to me to ask about it,—he was sure it was Master Wilford. ‘ That ’s what you

can't be sure of,' says I to him, 'for it was my Lady Arabella that went just now into the church.' 'Did she so?' says he, 'and is the door open now?' 'I believe it is, says I, for, now I think of it, the lock is broke off the little door behind the rood-loft; and so, if folks will be getting in to look at the fine new rood that has been set up, I can't help it.' And so the gentleman said no more, but off he goes too, and I do think he got into the church at the door behind the screen, under the rood-loft, for afterwards I saw him standing near it on the outside by the church. And so I went up to him, and I said I hoped there was no harm done to nobody, and he said no, but told me to get the lock of the little door mended, and not to let people be going into the church again, for the Friar would not like it."

"And what gentleman was it who made these inquiries?" said Arabella.

"Nay, I don't know," answered old Turf; "only it was a gentleman that rides by here

sometimes along with the Friar and another the like, to Wellminster Hall."

"There, my friend," said Arabella to the aged sexton,—“there is something for you, and now leave me to talk to this poor boy; I will see that he is taken care of. You had better not remain here after what has so lately chanced to his poor grandmother.”

“Why, that’s true, Lady,” said old Turf; “and I thank you for your largess. And if there’s any thing I can do for you, Mistress Arabella, in my way, I’ll do it with all my heart, to oblige you.”

“I thank you, friend,” replied Arabella; “but your business lies with the dead, and I am living, so I shall not trouble you.”

“No trouble at all, my Lady, I do assure you,” said old Turf, as he made a respectful bow, and once more uncovered his white locks,—“no trouble at all; it’s quite a pleasure to bury one’s friends, be they small or great; and so I give you a good evening:” and away went Gaffer Turf.

As soon as he was gone, Arabella asked Tommy, how it came to pass that he had not told her, or Master Edward, that the door behind the screen, near the rood-loft, was open on the morning when they met in the church.

“ I am sure I did not know it,” said Tommy ; “ and Gaffer Turf is getting very old now ; but, if he liked, he might have held his tongue about it to the strange gentleman ; but, I dare say, though he did not tell us so, that the gentleman gave him a silver sixpence to let him steal into the church when you were there, that he might hear what was said ; for old Turf loves money, and he was too deep for every body in the village, except poor granny ; and he would not have told you what he did just now, only for fear it should come to your ears, and so he might be blamed if he did not.”

“ Then, I can guess all the rest,” replied Arabella ; “ I can account for all that appeared so extraordinary to me this evening. I see we were both betrayed.”

“ Not by me, I am sure,” said Tommy, “ for I sat in the church-porch all the time you were together, as Master Edward told me to do ; and I never heard a foot-fall ; so that makes me sure that old Turf must have let the gentleman slip in, by taking him round the other path at the back of the church, for that’s the way to the little door behind the rood-loft. But I’ll never trust Gaffer Turf again as long as I live ; and granny used to say she didn’t half like him.”

“ It is unfortunate, indeed,” said Arabella ; “ and now, Tommy, I must speak to you, for the evening is drawing on apace.”

“ Don’t think of me, dear Lady,” replied the child, “ but do think of granny ; if you can do something for her, I shall be so glad.”

“ Would you like to see her ?” said Arabella.

“ I can’t see her,” answered the blind boy ; “ but I would give all I have in the world, though that is but a new groat, if I could get near her to comfort her in prison ; for I am

sure she will be taken to prison, and must be half-way there by this time."

"I am going to see poor Rose Wilford," said Arabella; "and, perhaps, I may see your granny too."

"Is Mistress Rose in prison?" cried the boy; "I never knew that. And is she taken up for a witch as well as granny?"

"No," replied Arabella; "Rose is accused of heresy."

"Ay," said Tommy, "that's what they call every body, who says their prayers as old Parson Wilford taught them. I shall go next, I suppose. I don't care if I do; for I'll never deny the Truth, nor King Edward's catechism, as it was taught me by Master Wilford."*

Arabella, whilst speaking to the boy, had carefully re-adjusted her mantle and hood, so as

* The catechism here spoken of by Tommy, was drawn up by Cranmer, and dedicated to that excellent young King, Edward the Sixth; hence, it was commonly called King Edward's Catechism. It was generally taught to young persons of the Reformed Church.

completely to conceal her person ; and being now prepared, she asked the boy if he could guide her to the lodgings of Master Edward Wilford, in Canterbury.

“ To Master Edward’s lodgings ?” cried Tommy ; “ why, I thought, you wanted to go to prison, Lady, to see granny and Mistress Rose ?”

“ So I do,” replied Arabella ; “ but I must first see the brother of Mistress Rose ; and you must guide me to him, for I am sure you know where he lives in Canterbury.”

“ Yes, that I do,” answered the boy ; “ he lodges at Widow Littlewit’s ; and I know the way to the house, as well as if I had eyes.”

“ Then we must instantly set out,” said Arabella ; “ and if you will but serve me faithfully, I will be your friend as long as I live.”

“ Be granny’s friend, dear young Lady,” cried Tommy, “ and that will do me most good ; for I shall break my heart if they hurt granny.”

“ We must cross the fields,” said Arabella ;

for I do not wish to pass down the village, to be seen by all the people."

"Come along then, Lady," replied Tommy; "and you do walk so fast that we shall be at Canterbury in less than half-an-hour."

"And here, Tommy," said Arabella, "carry this little parcel for me, and take care of it, since it contains something to do good to poor Mistress Rose; for those wicked men, at Canterbury, have burnt her in the hand."

"Have they been so cruel?" said Tommy; "how could they find the heart to hurt poor dear Mistress Rose? I wonder the sight of their own cruel deed did not strike them as blind as I am."

"They are wicked, indeed, Tommy," said Arabella; "but we must not now talk about them, for we are about turning into the high-road; so the less we speak the better, for I have drawn my cloak about my head so as not to be known; and remember, Tommy, upon no account to call me by my name, as we pass along

the streets of Canterbury ; but guide me as directly as you can to the lodgings of Widow Littlewit. I shall stay but a few minutes to speak to Master Edward, and then I must seek a person who, I hope, will gain me admission to the prison."

After this conversation, Arabella and her blind guide continued their route in profound silence ; and, entering Canterbury by the West-gate, they soon found themselves amidst the bustle of a large and populous city. As Arabella and the boy turned down one of the streets, in order to proceed to the habitation of Mother Littlewit, a mingled confusion of sounds struck upon their ears, and she perceived that some public disturbance was likely to impede their progress.

Several men, women, and boys, were engaged in one of those popular uproars of an indignant mob, that, even to this day, are sometimes seen in an English city, when a matter that is considered a breach on the freedom of John Bull

comes within the scope of present redress. In such cases, the arm of an Englishman will often prove stronger than the arm of the law, and obtains a speedy victory. So was it now, since the uproar in question was solely in consequence of the mob having rescued, from the clutches of Catchpole Miller and the town constable, poor old Gammer Plaise, whilst on her way to prison.

The savage practice of seizing the unhappy members of the Reformed Church, and of committing them to durance to take their trials on charges of heresy, was universally held in detestation by the great body of the people ; and, though kept in awe by the power of Mary and her threatening proclamations, times, nevertheless, were not wanting when they showed their abhorrence for these acts of cruelty, and public commotions often arose on such occasions. It was found necessary, therefore, to convey a prisoner for examination, or to his confinement, under the escort of a strong guard of bills and glaives. In the present instance, the insignifi-

cance of the accused had, by some oversight on the part of her enemies, induced them to believe that Gammer Plaise was too old, too poor, and too humble, to cause the least popular sensation on her removal from Wellminster to the prison of Canterbury Castle. So that a catchpole and a constable, armed by a warrant from Sir John Baker to apprehend and secure the person of the accused, was deemed a sufficient force to put their intentions in execution.

But in this they were mistaken. Gammer Plaise was a well-known character, for many miles round, in her own sphere: her skill in pharmacy had obtained considerable celebrity; her salves and ointments, for broken shins and cracked crowns after a village wake or fair, were held infallible by all the thick-skulled bumpkin votaries of the arts of fisty-cuff and single-stick. And the good wives of Canterbury as well as of Wellminster, who (to use a phrase of modern invention) were in the family way, deemed no old woman within twenty miles

of the place, so skilful at the hour of their need as Gammer Plaise. And for curing the thrush, colic, and other disorders incidental to children, she was considered unrivalled in the superlative degree amongst all the country gossips. And besides this, whenever any of the above-named good wives had over-fed or crammed their children, in pure kindness, so as nearly to produce suffocation, Gammer Plaise's cardamom drops were held infallible to expel what the gossips called the *vind* from their little overloaded stomachs.

And to all these valuable qualities (though the Gammer really was no witch, and never indeed pretended to be such) it was said she added some skill in fortune-telling; since, somehow or other, many a pretty rosy-cheeked damsel had more than once spread before her the open palm of a plump and ruddy hand, to know if John or Roger of the green was like to take that same little hand, and to slip a ring upon one of its fingers, under the roof of the church-

porch, where in these days the ceremony of marriage was generally performed. And for expounding those ancient omens of English superstition, the crossing of a solitary magpie in the path of a traveller, the night-howl of a dog, the long-sheeted flake of a tallow-candle, the tick of a death-watch, and the various significations of all sorts and kinds of dreams, (from the fearful vision of the white horse, to that dream of the dead which portends news of the living,) Gammer Plaise was not to be surpassed by any sibyl either of modern or ancient times.

These were the popular accomplishments of the poor old woman; but she had others nothing less useful, and really of a very respectable and praiseworthy order. Gammer Plaise was *largely* endowed with a considerable share of *strong common-sense*, which perhaps, after all, is not quite so common a possession as the term would imply; and, in modern times, there have been persons who have proved themselves

great fools in attempting to expound the meaning of a thing, which, though obvious enough in itself, was something beyond their own shallow conceptions. In addition to this natural strength of understanding, the old Gammer's education was very superior for her day ; since she could read Tindal's Translation of the Bible, without finding it necessary to spell out any words, except they had more than three syllables ; and her memory was so tenacious, that she knew many verses and even whole chapters of this Holy Book by heart ; and, attentively observing in what manner her good pastor, Owen Wilford, pronounced the hard names in the Bible, she was very particular to catch the sounds ; so that every Judaical appellative in her mouth received its due share of high intonation, or emphasis on a particular letter, that often made the double A roll like the R, and the *Noah* of the patriarch to come off from her lips with as true a Hebrew harshness on the last syllable as if it had fallen from the mouth of a Rabbi.

Her devout attention to the discourses of Owen Wilford, and having read with much acuteness a few good books on the Reformation that he had put into her hands, had also rendered her well acquainted with the principles on which it was founded; and, bold and zealous in the cause of Truth, the Gammer openly defied the Pope, the Bishop of London, and the devil, as she would a triumvirate leagued for the support of cruelty and sin.

This zeal in the cause of the Reformed Church had helped to bring on the greatest calamity of her life, since she had encouraged her only son (the father of blind Tommy) to suffer martyrdom at Smithfield, rather than recant and turn to the Church of Rome. From that period, there were times in which her intellects were said to be disturbed, so that whenever the Pope, or Bonner, (who had brought her son to the stake,) chanced to be named, she grew so violent in her discourse, that no earthly power had yet been able to stop the vehemence

of her accusations against the Church of Rome and the persecutions of the Protestants. At all other times, she was as quiet, compassionate, neighbourly, and kind-hearted an old woman as ever gossiped round a winter hearth ; for, in happier days, Gammer Plaise, notwithstanding all her good sense, had been as thorough a gossip as one would desire to circulate the news in a country town or village, where every body knows his neighbour's business quite as well, and sometimes much better than his own.

When Catchpole Miller and the constable had proceeded to take up Gammer Plaise (in consequence of her behaviour to Thornton at the removal of Owen Wilford), she had submitted quietly enough to their power, well knowing that she was too old and too feeble to contend with them ; but she remembered that this was the *market-day* of Canterbury, and she determined in what manner to avail herself of that circumstance, when the proper moment arrived for action.

As soon, therefore, as she found herself in one of the streets near the busy scene of traffic, she observed some stout farmers and their young men, who were about returning home after market,—and seeing that they had just issued forth from the Chequers, a hostelry or inn, famous for its strong ale (ever since the days of Geoffrey Chaucer, where it was quaffed by his pilgrims), she rightly judged that the spirit of the potent beer had in no small quantity already mounted and settled in their heads, since they talked loud, and exhibited other symptoms of their late conviviality ; such as showing the side-path of the street to be too narrow for the bold figures or lateral movements which they made in the effort to walk straightforward, and roaring out a jovial chorus, with throats as full and voices as strong as a bellman's when he cries lost goods.

Gammer Plaise, on the sight of these well-known friends, no longer kept silence, but halloing to them in a shrill voice, the cry

met their ears, and they instantly faced about, and recollected the village apothecary of so much note. She then asked them, in an imploring tone, if, in God's name, they would suffer a poor old neighbour to be taken to Canterbury gaol and tried for a heretic and a witch, only because she had said her prayers, as all good people did in King Edward's time, and had made herself useful amongst her friends.

The English are a generous people, and as such, more especially when their generosity is enforced by the potent fumes of strong ale, they generally take part with the weaker or oppressed party, even though that party should chance to be in the wrong, as it sometimes happens in such cases. In the present, however, Gammer Plaise was really an innocent sufferer; and her warm appeal to her stout Kentish neighbours, was as warmly and as gallantly answered by them, as any appeal of the like nature might have been, had it been addressed by a young and distressed damsel to a party of knights-

errant in the reign of King Edward the Third. They instantly rallied, or rather staggered, round her; oaken cudgels were flourished, fists were clenched, and hearty cuffs dealt smartly round in a minute; and Catchpole Miller and the town constable rolled in the kennel before those astonished officers of the law had even time to offer resistance or defence; whilst the mingled uproar of hootings, shoutings, railings, laughter, and curses, with a shower of mud and stones, (the latter bestowed by sundry ragged and idle boys who had volunteered to join the rescue,) were sent after the affrighted catchpole and his companion, as soon as they could recover themselves to find the use of their legs, and use them to run off as fast as they could, to gain farther assistance in the execution of their warrant.

It was just at this victorious crisis when Arabella and blind Tommy drew near the scene of action. Tommy, whose faculty of hearing, as if in some measure to recompense his want

of seeing, was peculiarly acute, in an instant caught the well-known accents of his granny's tongue; and, leaping and frisking forward with delight that was perfectly ecstatic, he cried out, "That 's granny, I am sure that 's granny—they have set her free, hark! they have rolled the catchpoles in the kennel: only do hear the boys!" and away ran Tommy towards the very thickest of the action.

Arabella, who, wholly unacquainted with the place where he had proposed to guide her, felt she could do nothing without her conductor, was now compelled to follow after him, and to make her way as well as she could amongst the mob assembled and assembling from all quarters of the town. Farmers and old wives returning from market, rosy maidens, and apprentices, apple-women, stall-keepers, and the valiant champions, with their oaken cudgels still flourished in their hands, were now all engaged and all in motion. Some swore that they would hang the catchpole; others, being warmed in

their cups, declared that they would do as much for the Bishop of Dover, the Cardinal, and even the Queen, who permitted such cruelties in her kingdom. Many averred it was high time things should change, or nobody would be safe if somebody did not begin to act, and three cheers were voted and given to the jolly Kentishmen, who had dared to pluck up heart enough to show a true English spirit, to trounce a catchpole, and save an honest old woman from being burnt as an heretic. Popular feeling spreads like wildfire, and nothing could exceed the general good-will now displayed towards the old Gammer,—nothing could go beyond the valour, shown on all sides, of tongue.”

But popular feeling, like many other spontaneous feelings, is often as easily put down as it is called up: a commotion that arises from it may be quelled even by the very sight of a power sufficiently strong to subdue it. So was it now; for the mob, who had

hitherto talked, roared, and threatened so lustily, were somewhat confounded on observing at the end of the street a strong guard, not only of bills and glaives, but even of halberts, advancing under the conduct of no less a personage than the Mayor of Canterbury himself—who came to put down the riot in the market-place, by virtue of the Queen's proclamation against all rioting and riotous persons.

Had the Mayor and his party come armed with cudgels, and prepared to wage war with that national weapon, a stout fist, not a Kentishman present but would have stood his ground, and have fought, boxed, given and taken cuffs, cracked heads, and bloody noses, and would have cudgelled in support of Gammer Plaise, till the last bone in his skin had been broken; but halberts, bills, and glaives, were weapons of a very different kind, and things wholly beyond the practice of a village green or wake. The farmers, or their lads, could never stand them on equal terms; and the younger part

of the assembled mob coupled the idea of the *Mayor*, who had presented himself before them, with that of whipping, the stocks, and a committal to Canterbury Castle, so that they soon dropped their voices into silence ; and even the farmers slunk back, chop-fallen, with low grumblings of complaint, like growling dogs before the upraised staff of their masters.

Still, even in the midst of this dispiriting change of scene, Gammer Plaise was not forgotten ; and some of the more considerate in the assembly called out to her to get out of the way as fast as she could, and to take shelter in some house, till the Mayor of Canterbury, and the constables, and the guard, should be past, for perhaps by this measure she might save herself from immediate detention.

Tommy heard the advice given in so friendly a manner to his grandmother ; and instantly catching her by the gown, he exclaimed, “ Come along with me,—come along with me ; I know where to take you ; you ’ll be quite

safe,—come along.”—And turning to Arabella, who stood near the poor old woman, ready to sink down with vexation and alarm, he said to her softly, “Do, dear young Lady, help on old granny, and I’ll take her along with us to Master Edward’s lodgings,—she will be quite safe there.”

Arabella, in common humanity, could not object to this proposal; and, affording what assistance she could to Gammer Plaise, aided by the good-will of the mob, she managed to get off with Tommy and the poor woman, before the Mayor and officers had reached the centre of the market-place, where the former was to read the proclamation, and to address the people in recommendation of a peaceful submission to her Grace’s pleasure, which, if resisted, he should be compelled to enforce by the strong arm of the law, to say nothing of the arm of such as, already possessed of halberts, bills, and glaives, followed close at his tail, as old Gammer Plaise expressed it.

Tommy succeeded very well in piloting Arabella and his granny down sundry back streets and narrow alleys, to avoid the more public haunts of Canterbury. For, though blind, the boy (who had lived in Canterbury till he was taken home by his grandmother after the death of his father) could find his way with surprising exactness, either by direct or indirect paths, to any part of the city; so that the present circuitous course was not at all beyond the power of his navigation. However, when Tommy came to the end of a certain narrow, dark, and dirty outlet, then known by the name of Rag Alley, he paused for a moment. "What do you stay for, child?" said Arabella, who was extremely impatient to reach the harbour of destination.

"I only wanted to listen, to know that all was safe," replied Tommy; "for this is a parading day, and I hope we shall not meet any body to lett us."

"It is All-Saints-day," said Gammer Plaise;

“and a fine day the Romans and the Beast make of it, to parade about their images and their shows.”

“Hush ! hush ! good wife,” cried Arabella ; “you forget where you are, or the mischief that may befall us if you talk so in the open streets. Only remember what you have escaped, and be silent. And I must beg of you not to talk so, in my hearing, of a Church to which both my father and myself give obedience.”

“I beg your pardon, young Lady,” said the old woman ; “I did not know who you were, with that hood so close over your face ; but I know you now that I hear your voice. And, dear heart, what can make you, Lady Arabella, to be along with my Tommy ?”

“Pray, do not notice who I am,” replied Arabella ; “I beg it of you as a favour, and especially, now we are in the public streets.” By this time, the little party had issued out of the alley, and were crossing one of the largest

and the broadest streets in Canterbury, near the Cathedral. Whilst so doing, the sounds of minstrelsy burst upon their ear; and, ere the little party could ascertain whence these sounds proceeded, another circumstance arrested the attention of Arabella. This was nothing less than the procession of the host, as it returned from the house of a sick person, to whom it had been carried with the usual parade.

A boy walked foremost, ringing a bell that he carried in his hand; whilst others, dressed in scarlet and white robes, followed his steps, bearing high and lighted tapers along the streets. Next appeared a moving canopy, supported by four gilt pillars, each of which was held up by a priest.

And what were the feelings of Arabella, when she saw walking beneath the canopy, and carrying the pyx that enclosed the host, no less a person than Friar John de Villa Garcina! She knew that the hood of the cloak which she had borrowed from Deborah must effectually pre-

vent her from being known by the Friar ; but still, the mere conviction that she was so near him, and that he had crossed her path, caused her heart to beat quick and her limbs to tremble, though she thought there was no absolute ground for immediate alarm.

But in this, Arabella was mistaken ; for it might be either that things in this world do generally run counter when we would most desire them to run smooth ; or that the demon of discord, who had so lately exerted his influence over the mob in the market-place, had been exorcised thence by the Mayor, and had resolved to be avenged, by stirring up strife somewhere else, that evening, in Canterbury, or by whatever other train of ill-luck the reader may choose to imagine ; but, certain it is, that a second, and ultimately a more serious cause of alarm, now gave birth to a second uproar.

How this exactly happened Arabella could not tell, for she had turned her head aside the moment she recognised the Friar ; Gammer

Plaise's visual organs had long been dimmed by age, and Tommy was totally blind ; so, no one of them could *see* how the affair began, the first knowledge of it being communicated to them by their sense of hearing. A loud crash upon the pavement was followed by one united loud and tremendous cry uttered by all the persons about the canopy, and the words " Seize him ! seize him ! secure the wretch ! he has rushed upon the Friar ; he has knocked down the pyx," met their ear.

In a moment the populace took the alarm, and hurried round this new scene of action ; for any public disturbance, either for a good or a bad cause, is sure never to want witnesses, since curiosity and the excitement of an uproar seem to be feelings inherent to all generations. Arabella, her guide, and the old woman, were again stopped in their progress, and fairly hemmed in by the mob, and they now learned a confused account of the cause of this disturbance.

It appeared that an old man, in great haste,

had suddenly issued from a by-street, at the very moment the Friar was passing the corner of it beneath the canopy, and that this man had either willingly, or (as he averred) unwittingly, in his extreme haste, dashed under the canopy in question, and brushed past the elbow of the Friar, with such violence as to cause that holy man to drop the pyx from his hands. This was of course tumbled on the ground, and the top of it was broken, when, to add to the disaster, a villainous cur that followed close at the old man's heels, thinking perhaps that his master wished him to interfere, laid hold of the top of the broken pyx, and carried it off in his mouth, in the sight of every one assembled, scampering down the street, unharmed by a volley of stones sent after the animal as the readiest means of knocking out his brains.

The dog however escaped, and the vengeance which had hitherto been chiefly directed against this canine offender, was now levelled at his master, who was held by the collar, ac-

cused and abused with such vehemence by all present, that scarcely a word he uttered, whilst attempting his defence, could be heard, and, without farther ceremony, the Friar ordered him off in custody of some of his own people to the house of Sir John Baker, Justice of the Peace, there to undergo his examination, and to plead whatever he might have to urge in mitigation of his offence.

“As sure as I live, granny,” said Tommy, as he once more set forward to guide his party through this unlucky journey, “that old man was Abel Allen; I knew his voice in a moment, notwithstanding all the din they made about him; and I would wager a silver sixpence, if I had it, that the dog was Pincher. Poor Abel will get into a world of trouble; for Friar John, I am sure, hates him because he serves Parson Wilford.”

Little more was said, and in a few minutes Tommy completed his pilotage, and, going up to the door of a small house that stood in a

respectable street of Canterbury, he rapped upon it with the end of a switch which he carried in his hand. The door was opened, and Tommy, Arabella, and his granny, passed through into the passage.

CHAPTER IX.

As soon as the little party arrived within Widow Littlewit's house, Tommy made the inquiry if Master Edward Wilford might be at home. The good widow replied in the negative, but said that he was expected home every minute, and that his servant, Abel Allen, had been sent in haste to another part of Canterbury to order horses for Master Edward, who was going off on a journey, she believed, that night. Arabella listened attentively to this discourse, and now ventured to express her desire to be allowed to remain in the house till Master Wilford's return, as she wished particularly to speak with him that evening.

Tommy, whose mind was engrossed by the

danger that threatened his grandmother should she be retaken, for the present thought of nothing else, and said very innocently to the widow, “ I know, good Dame Littlewit, you are not one of those wicked people who like to give up their neighbours to be burnt, and to be put into prison, because they won’t do what God forbids them,—to kneel down and worship images, and serve the Pope as if he were God Almighty.”

“ The Lord forbid !” replied Widow Littlewit—(laying a strong emphasis on the word *Lord*, which now, in common discourse, was used by those who wished to show by their language that they were Reformers and not Papists)—“ The Lord forbid ! All Canterbury knows me, though sometimes I have hid what I am from certain folks ; yet I have often wondered that they let me and my poor baby bide in peace. But I am poor ; and though I don’t go to mass, yet I set a watch upon my tongue ; for, as brother Allen says, a close tongue makes

a wise head ; and ‘ be prudent, Sister Little-wit,’ says he, ‘ and there’s no call for you to be talking to others about *logical* affairs, unless they first propose religious talk to you.’ And so I keep the house and hold my peace, and so I suppose that I owe, to a close tongue, being still suffered to use it with my head on my shoulders.”

“ I wish granny had done so too,” cried Tommy, “ and then she might have been safe now. But she never would hold her peace when any body named the Queen, or Bonner, or any of those cruel people.”

“ I hold my peace !” said the old Gammer. “ I be dumb, when the wicked go by my door that they have bathed with the blood of my son—my only son—and thy father, thou poor dark child ! And if I did hold my peace, the very stones would cry out upon them.”

“ Now do let me speak, granny,” said Tommy, “ and you shall talk as fast as you like by and by ; only do let me tell all about it to good

Widow Littlewit, and I am sure she will hide you if she can for the present, for there is no going back to Wellminster for you.—You see, good Widow Littlewit, that we were taken up for heresy, and for witchcraft, and—

Tommy, who could never separate the idea of himself from that of his grandmother, had made use of the word *we*, which deceived the widow ; who, on hearing it, instantly exclaimed, “ Good Lord ! And you don’t say so ? ”

“ Yes, but I do,” continued Tommy ; “ and it is as true as that I am stone-blind. They took us up ; but the people going home from market saved us, and rolled the catchpole and the constable in the kennel : and so I brought granny here, to ask you to hide us for the night, till the search is over after us ; for I didn’t know what else to do : and so I am sure you won’t turn us out. And the lady here, who, I know, has a thing over her face, is a fine grand lady, though she be come with granny and me, and she will tell you all about what she wants

when Master Edward comes home. But pray don't talk more now, but lose no time to hide granny."

"I will do my best," replied the widow ;
"and that 's all a poor woman can do; though my house is a poor house to hide in, for I have but one tidy room, the little wainscot parlour ; and I have no hiding-holes at all, not so much as a dark closet big enough to hold a baby ; and my door has no strong bolts and bars ; though if it had, and I made them fast, they would not be fast long, if halberts and bills came afore them with a Justice's warrant stuck at the end of each of them.—But here, step into the little parlour, and lock the door when you get in. It is the lodger Master Edward's room ; and if any body comes, I can then swear safely, you know, that I dare not go into it ; and if he comes himself, you have nothing to fear, and he won't disturb you."

"Have you no other room," said Arabella,
"in which we could enter till his return?"

“None upon earth,” replied the widow. “But don’t fear Master Edward; for, dear heart! his father is in trouble up at the Castle yonder; and Master Edward is as kind a soul as ever broke bread, though somewhat *moloncholly*, and not much given to say more words than he can help. So do step in, and I’ll befriend you all for the love of the true Church and King Edward’s Catechism; for ’tis pity innocent people should come to harm because they do none.”

The honest widow was something loquacious, and, being in the habit of keeping a watch over her tongue, as she herself declared, when in doubtful company, she held it but a fair remuneration to indulge herself in the pleasure of hearing the sounds of her own voice, when she could do so with a full confidence in the good faith of her auditors; so that, though Arabella had once or twice attempted to speak, the widow talked so fast and so freely, she could not get in a word. “I am sure,” cried Dame Littlewit,

in a tone of alarm,—“ I am sure I heard somebody at the door ; so do get into the room before any body can hear you talking so fast (though nobody was speaking but herself), and I will do the best I can to conceal you. I’ll hide you, I warrant.”

The honest woman hurried them all into Master Edward’s apartment ; and having heard them turn the key in the inside, she hastened to see who might be at the door. Arabella, who could not help feeling a little abashed even before old Gammer Plaise, at her thus seeking young Wilford, now endeavoured to account for it ; and said, with truth, that she was desirous to speak to him, before she went to visit his unhappy sister in Canterbury Castle, the nature of whose misfortune she detailed at large to the old woman.

When Gammer Plaise heard the tale of Rose’s having been burnt in the hand, a torrent of indignation burst from her lips in language so bold and forcible, that Arabella was astonished

by her vehemence, and alarmed lest she should be overheard. She conjured the poor woman to moderate her feelings; and, in order to turn her attention if possible into another channel, she entered upon the subject of the remedies she had in charge for the relief of Rose. Gammer Plaise's wrath was for a moment diverted, and she proceeded to undo the packet that held them and to examine each article with medical precision, tasting the fever mixture, and commenting upon it with as much zeal and interest as if it had been a remedy of her own preparation. She pronounced a favourable opinion of the drug, eagerly desired the remedies might be applied without delay, and again replaced them carefully in the packet.

Whilst this was passing, Widow Littlewit was very differently engaged with no less a person than Master Edward himself, who had returned home, and was walking hastily forward towards the door of the chamber that he occupied as a lodger. But ere he could reach it,

his landlady begged so earnestly that he would grant her an audience for ten minutes, that he could not refuse to comply with her request. The widow then opened her discourse, something like a sermon of the period by divisions, and sub-divisions, into first, second, and third parts, commencing by an eulogium on her own prudence in the government of the tongue, which she began and ended, notwithstanding every interjectional effort of her impatient hearer to solicit her to come to the matter of her discourse.

Secondly, she dilated on the kindness of her heart and the goodness of her disposition; on her willingness to do what she could for the relief of the afflicted members of the Reformed Church; and this bringing to her mind the venerable Owen Wilford, the good woman here diverged a little even from the second division of her subject, by a long and feeling harangue, expressive of her sorrow for the fate of the father of her hearer, and for his own, in being

beset with so many enemies ; and this bringing to mind that there were enemies that laid in wait to rob the traveller on his way, she thought of her lodger's intended journey, and, making a second digression on this point, she ventured to express her hopes that Master Edward was not going away from any cause of discontent, since she was desirous to do all that a lone woman could do to make him comfortable in her house.

Edward Wilford satisfied her on this head in two words ; and, saying that as his preparations for that journey were pressing he must wish her a good evening, once more was about to move towards the door of his apartment, but the widow interposed her person between him and this intent, and, assuring him that what she had to say was of the utmost consequence, Edward consented to listen, on condition that she would disclose it in a few words.

In compliance with this request, she cut short the third division of her discourse, and, instead

of entering upon a full explanation of the various doctrinal points that caused her to hold in detestation the Pope and the Bishop of London, she contented herself with a sweeping anathema against them, fairly and roundly wishing his Holiness, the Queen, Bonner, and Thornton at the devil, since they had conspired to lay violent hands upon some innocent people, whom she averred Master Edward knew very well as his father's old parishioners at Wellminster; that they had been taken up for heresy, rescued by the mob, who had interfered in their behalf, and had rolled the catchpoles, with Thornton and Harpsfield, (a small addition of the widow's, in her own exact way of telling the story,) in the kennel, and that these *persecuted lambs*, for so she styled them, one of whom she admitted to be an old woman, had now taken *refuse*, as she was pleased to say, in Master Edward's room, there being no other place in all the house in which she could hope to hide them.

“ I am truly sorry for them,” said Edward, “ and they are most welcome to the shelter of my room ; but I want some papers that are in that chamber to carry with me on my journey, and thither I must go instantly, my good hostess, to procure them.”

And thither Edward was going, when a tremendous knocking, or rather assault, upon the house-door, alarmed both him and the widow. “ As sure as I ’m an honest woman,” said she, “ they are come here to seek these poor people. For God’s sake, Master Edward, do come along with me to the door ; they will beat it down, if I do not open it to them ; and I am but a lone woman to meet such a gang of fellows as that Thornton sends into whose houses he may please in Canterbury. Do come along with me. Bless my heart ! do but hear how they knock and rap ! The Lord help me ! or I am a lost woman, as sure as my name is Littlewit.”

Edward followed her, and, the instant she

opened the door, a whole army of bills appeared before her sight, headed by Lawyer Cluny, who was supported on the right-hand by Catchpole Miller, and on the left by the town constable ; both of whom still bore about their persons the “filthy witness” of the kennel into which they had been so lately rolled by the valiant farmers.”

Cluny, who was one of those brave men whose courage is never daunted when sure of the support of numbers, came boldly forward, and demanded in the Queen’s name the body of one Martha Plaise, commonly called Gammer Plaise, who had escaped by violent means from lawful custody, and was seen by a person now present, who had deposed to the same, to have taken shelter in the house of Widow Littlewit, in company with two other suspected persons, the one being a blind boy commonly called Tommy, and the other an unknown female muffled in a cloak.

The sight of Cluny, the gravity with which he made this solemn address to the widow in the

language of the law, the appearance of the bespattered catchpole and constable, together with the bills, &c. so overcame Dame Littlewit, that, notwithstanding her desire to serve her *persecuted lambs*, she no longer persisted in the attempt, nor could she deny the truth, but fell to imploring mercy on herself as a poor lone widow who had a young child, and who, as she declared, thought it no harm, only just to let two or three poor people into her house, when one of them came to Master Edward on particular business, and was now in his room for the same purpose; the female muffled in a cloak, about whose name or business she averred she was as ignorant as the babe unborn, only she was sure it must be something private, and she was also quite sure that if such a person had not wanted to see her lodger, neither Gammer Plaise, nor blind Tommy, nor any body else, should have darkened her door that evening.

“ Good woman,” said Cluny, “ this statement quite alters the case, as far as *you* are concerned

in it,—that is, if you can bring evidence to prove it, since it will clear you of the charge of aiding, abetting, or concealing any prisoner or prisoners under cognizance of the law in matters of capital offence contrary to the statute, and the late proclamation issued by her Majesty and Council. Be pleased to show me the way to where these people are.—Catchpole Miller, come along with me.”

The widow curtsied and curtsied to Cluny at every word he spoke, and was now advancing to lead the way to the chamber, where the objects of his inquiry were concealed, but Edward Wilford interposed with a determined confidence in his manner, and said in a cool but firm voice, “That apartment is mine, so long as I pay rent for it; and no person shall enter it without my consent, unless he can produce a legal warrant for so doing. Threats will not pass current with me, whatever they may do with this simple woman.”

Cluny looked surprised, but, taking a paper

from under his sleeve, he replied, with his usual effrontery, “There is the warrant, granted by Sir John Baker, Knight, and one of Her Majesty’s Justices of the Peace for the County of Kent ; it is legally drawn up, I assure you, for I indited it myself, by his order, being clerk to that worthy magistrate, as well as secretary to the Reverend Suffragan Bishop of Dover : shall I rehearse the matter of it ?”

“Be pleased to let me read it,” said Wilford ; “I shall not resist lawful authority, but I insist upon seeing that it is lawful.”

“Very proper,” replied Cluny, “exactly right ; treating the matter quite in a legal way ; you will be satisfied, if you do but run your eye over it.”

“There you are mistaken,” said Edward ; “I am not at all satisfied, nor shall I suffer you to force yourself into my chamber upon a warrant such as this is.”

“Be pleased to state your objection,” answered Cluny ; “I think there can be no flaw in the in-

dictment, nor any want of formality. The woman has no alias, and her name is correctly spelt, proper date and all, and—”

“This warrant,” said Wilford, “expressly states that you are empowered to arrest the body of Martha Plaise, in the parish of Westminster; it can have no effect in Canterbury, since it is not so expressed; and I will not suffer it to be executed in my lodgings in that city.— I know the poor old creature very well; she was a parishioner of my father’s, honest and useful in her station; and I will protect her against you, since in doing so, I act but according to the law you are so fond of advocating.” And saying these words, Edward Wilford placed himself against the chamber-door in a posture of defence.

Cluny was nothing abashed; but, ordering the catchpole and town constable, with some half-dozen of bills, to rally round him, then to advance and do their duty in the Queen’s name, he not only directed them to force the door,

but also to begin hostilities, by first arresting, securing, and seizing the body of Edward Wilford, for having presumed to interrupt the officers of the law in the execution of their duty ; saying to Wilford, with a smile of ineffable contempt, “ You show your ignorance of the law of the land, Master Wilford ; the woman *was* arrested in the parish of *Wellminster*, according to the letter of the warrant, but having escaped the hands of the officers in Canterbury, she becomes liable to be retaken any where, by virtue of the statute, without farther authority—be pleased to stand out of the way.”

Edward, who, as the reader is already aware, was of a passionate temper, fired at Cluny’s insolent manner, replied to him warmly, and being answered with yet greater insolence, a scuffle ensued, since, confident in his own strength, and holding both Cluny and his attendants in the utmost contempt, the impetuous and hotheaded young man madly attempted a fruitless resistance. But, strong, active, and

bold as he was, Edward Wilford was overpowered by numbers and secured. The Attorney instantly ordered him to be conveyed off the scene of action to the house of that worthy magistrate, Sir John Baker; directing he should there be held apart from any one, till he (Cluny) should arrive with the rest of the prisoners, when he purposed to state the whole matter to the Justice, before Master Wilford could have any opportunity of consulting or caballing with those prisoners. The Attorney was obeyed: Edward Wilford was carried off to Sir John Baker's, and there shut up in a room by himself; and soon after, the redoubted Cluny arrived, having in custody the three suspected persons, viz. old Gammer Plaise, Blind Tommy, and an unknown female muffled in a cloak.

When these last-named parties were ushered into the chamber of the Justice of the Peace, Sir John, with all the importance of his office, seated himself at the head of a table, and made his clerk, Thomas Cluny, sit down by him. The

Attorney opened the case, and stated at large those circumstances already known to the reader, the same being deposed to by Catchpole Miller and the town constable. Here the case (as we may call it) for the Crown closed; and the Justice called upon Tommy to come forward, in order to examine him, either as a witness, or as a party concerned, for Sir John himself did not seem to know which. His brains were at all times muddled,—and this evening, both sack, canary, and home-brewed, had helped to give them an additional shake.

“Please your Worship,” said Tommy, as he came forward, “what may I have done amiss?”

“Done amiss, you young sprig of sin and the devil!” cried Sir John; “why, have not you been guilty of the crime of aiding and abetting, as my clerk here says, that abominable old woman to escape from the hands of the law, when she is accused of the heavy offences of heresy and witchcraft?”

“Do you know the consequences of such an

act?" said Cluny; "do you know what you are liable to? Do you know the statute?"

"I know nothing about it," replied Tommy; "but I will tell you all I do know about granny."

"Ay, ay, let us hear that, my lad," said Sir John Baker; "I dare say, you know a great deal about her; and your proper behaviour, to give evidence to convict such a notorious offender, shall not want encouragement, I assure you."

"I know," continued Tommy, "that I had an honest man to my father, and that the cruel people up in London burnt him at Smithfield, and I was left poor, fatherless, and blind; and I had not a friend in the world, for every body said I was the son of a heretic, and so I deserved to go to the devil, as father had done before me. And then my old granny took me home to her, and kept me as well as she could, and toiled hard to do it; though she could not have done it neither, if Parson Wilford had not helped her; and she taught me to be a good boy, and to say my prayers; and she used to

read the Bible to me herself, and let Mistress Rose teach me to play upon the virginals; and granny was always good to me and to every body; and that 's all I know about her: and if I did help her to get off from the Catchpole, when the boys rolled him in the kennel, I am glad of it, and I would do so again now, if I could. And if you mean, as you said, to encourage me to talk against granny, you would be a wicked man, instead of a Justice of the Peace; for I could not do that without telling a lie, and all liars are to go into the burning pit, as the Scripture book says."

"Why, you impudent young heretic! you scurvy little beast!" said Sir John; "do you dare to stand before one of Her Majesty's Justices of the Peace, and to glory in having assisted in obstructing the execution of the laws?—I think, Cluny, this offence comes under the statute?"

"Certainly under the proclamation," replied Cluny.

"Youngster," said Sir John Baker, "you

ought to know, as my friend, the Reverend Bishop of London, says, that when father, mother, grandmother, or brother, are proved to be heretics, children from that moment are absolved from all obedience to them by the Pope's decree."

"But not by God's decree, I am sure," answered Tommy; "and I don't know what you mean by heretics; for, if they are wicked people, and don't say their prayers, granny can never be a heretic."

"You have been finely taught, I see," replied Sir John.

"And, I suppose," said Cluny, "that you know nothing, forsooth, of this old woman's doings here; you have never seen her raise the devil?"

"Alack, no!" replied Tommy; "nor I could no more see him than I could you, Master Attorney, if he now stood at your elbow; for I am blind, and cannot see wickedness; though I know what it is, by what you are doing to granny."

"But did you never hear your granny con-

jure, boy?" said Sir John Baker; "did you never hear her conjure, as witches do?"

"What does it mean?" inquired Tommy.

"Why—why, conjuring, boy," replied the Justice, something puzzled by the question; "conjuring is conjuring; a—a sort of a calling up of the Evil Spirit by forbidden arts."

"By mystical signs and ceremonies," cried Cluny; "uttering strange words, using abominations, and turning God's word into unlawful practices; making it a warrant to obtain vile ends, wholly against the truth, and to the injury of one's neighbour."

"Why, then, conjuring is like being a Justice of the Peace," replied Tommy; "for, I am sure, it can't be worse than Sir John Baker's warrant against granny, to put her into prison who never hurt a living soul."

"What! did she never entice people to her house," said Sir John, "to satisfy them, by telling them who had their stolen goods? Did they never come to her to find lost spoons?"

“Why, I can’t say,” answered Tommy; “but I did once know granny tell a poor woman about such a thing as that.”

“Speak it, you young rogue!—speak it this moment,” cried Sir John, “or I will have you in the stocks.”

“Answer his Worship, boy, this instant,” said Cluny; “you may be compelled to do so by the statute.”

“If I must, I must,” said Tommy, “though I am sure you will not like to hear it, Master Attorney; for two years ago, when Widow Littlewit lost her silver caudle-spoon, granny did tell her she was sure you stole it, or made away with it, when you lodged in her house, at the Old Magpie, and went away without paying the widow her money.”

“You rascally young heretic!” cried Cluny, “how dare you utter scandal and libels in the very face of justice? But I see what you are; you are dangerous, though young; and his Worship will do well to look to you, and to hear

how you can answer on certain points of the faith, for I suspect you are as great a heretic as your granny. Your Worship will examine the lad."

"To be sure, I will," replied Sir John. "What must I ask him, Clerk? You are used to these things in Master Thornton's house."

"His Worship would inquire of you, boy," continued Cluny, "if you ever attend mass, go to confession, and receive holy bread and water, and observe other rites of the Church of Rome, once more so happily established in these realms. Why don't you answer?"

"Because his Worship don't ask me about it," said Tommy.

"But my Clerk does," cried Sir John, "and that 's all the same thing. Answer directly to the questions."

"No," replied Tommy; "I was taught by Parson Wilford and granny to say King Edward's Catechism and the Ten Commandments, and there is nothing about what you talk of in either of them."

“Then you don’t worship the rood and pray to our Lady the Virgin Mary?” said Cluny.

“No,” answered Tommy; “I worship God, and I never said my prayers to any lady but Mistress Rose, when she taught me how to say them night and morning.”

“Commit him, Clerk,—commit the rascal heretic instantly,” cried Sir John Baker; “he is young in years, but old in iniquity.”

“What!” exclaimed old Gammer Plaise, who had hitherto observed a profound silence, during this examination of her grandson; “what, do you sit there, like Herod, in his purples, and in his robes, to hold the rod of power, to slay babes and innocents? You and your wicked people took my son and burnt him, and will you now take my son’s son, the only remaining prop of my years, the last green leaf upon my withered branch, and he, too, a poor thing as dark as night?”

“That’s nothing to do with it,” said Sir John; “was not Joan Waste blind, and did not she

suffer for heresy ? and didn't my Right Reverend Friend, the Bishop of London, burn a rascally blind old harper, ay, and a blind boy too, for the truth sake?—these, I think, be examples.”

“ Yes,” cried Gammer Plaise, “ and they are examples of blood that shall cast you, and Bonner, and all of you into the burning pit, where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth ; and then shall you cry out to bid this poor innocent to bring you but a drop of water to slake the thirst of your tongue, and he shall answer you, as Abraham did to Dives, between thee and me there is a great gulph fixed.”

“ Silence that old woman, Cluny,” said Sir John, “ or, if she will talk, bid her teach her grandson better things, and let him save himself, while he yet may, by worshipping God in our way.”

“ I bid him to turn to your way !” cried his grandmother, with fury in her looks—“ No ; I thank my God, that the last remnant that is left of a poor thing like me, is made worthy to suf-

fer. I will bid him run to the stake and embrace it, rather than to you and to your filthy idols. And as to worshipping as you worship ! I will tell you, Sir John, who is your God—your god is your belly ; and you think more of a posset of warm ale, and a feast of the creature, than ever you did in all your life of the feast of God's promise."

"Hold your tongue, old woman," cried Cluny, "or you shall be gagged ; the statute allows it, to prevent heretical doctrines and railings from being spread abroad."

"Yes, Thomas Cluny," continued the old woman, "you will gag my tongue, when it tells you truth ; when it tells what *you* are, and that your god is Mammon."

"Push her aside," said Sir John, "and bring forward that other prisoner.—Catchpole, bring forward that woman so closely muffled up in the cloak and hood."

Arabella, trembling and ready to sink into the earth, was now thrust forward. "Who are you,

mistress?" said Sir John; "and how came you in company with this old beldame?"

"I did not come with her," replied Arabella.

"Not come with her!" said Cluny; "you were found all together locked up in the same room,—the room occupied by Master Edward Wilford (now in custody in the next chamber), at Widow Littlewit's house."

"I was there with her by chance," answered Arabella.

"By chance!" cried Cluny; "why Mistress Littlewit is ready to depose, that you came with the intent to meet her lodger, Master Wilford."

Here the examination was interrupted by a bustling movement, that was heard by all present,—it seemed to come from the hall of entry. The chamber-door was now opened, and who shall speak the surprise and dismay of Arabella, when she saw her father enter, accompanied by Friar John, Sir Francis Morgan, and Samuel Collins, as Abel Allen followed close behind them, in the custody of the Friar's attendants.

CHAPTER X.

SIR JOHN BAKER rose up to receive the Sheriff of the County as he entered, and Arabella shrunk back into a remote part of the chamber, dreading that discovery which she now feared must be inevitable, yet willing to protract it to the last moment.

“How is this, Sir Richard?” said the Justice, as he addressed the Sheriff;—“You are returned very suddenly from Dover; we did not look for you in Canterbury for some days to come.”

“My return was hastened by peculiar circumstances,” replied Sir Richard Southwell. “I found it necessary I should hasten here, in order to dispatch some letters of consequence

by a sure hand to the Council, and I was proceeding to my own house, when I met Friar John and Sir Francis Morgan, who were coming hither with this man, charged with a great offence ; the crime being no less than that of having insulted the holy Father, whilst engaged in a sacred office, in casting the pyx upon the ground, where it was broken, and shamefully dishonoured, even by a brute. The Friar told me of this, and begged me to proceed with him to your house, to be present at his examination. Sir Francis, too, has communicated to me a matter so serious, that it is absolutely necessary it should come under the cognizance of the civil law without delay."

" Why, here is matter upon matter," said Sir John Baker, " and we of the Commission, Sir Richard, can scarce find time to take rest in our beds for these naughty times and rascal heretics. Look at that old woman, as arrant a witch, I assure you, as ever rode upon a broomstick ; as foul-mouthed a Lutheran as ever lied in the

throat. And that imp there, that stands by her side, fit for nothing but a stake and a tar-barrel, I promise you ; a proper fry for a red-hot faggot he will make, as my Right Reverend Friend, the Bishop of London, says. And then, there we have, in the next room, Master Edward Wilford, the old heretic parson's son, who sheltered these people, and knocked about my officers like nine-pins. And there's a jade muffled in a cloak and hood, and found in Master Edward's lodging, and nobody knows who she is. I was just going to examine the quean, when you came in. I am glad that you are come, since your help may be useful.—Catchpole Miller, bring forward the jade, and I'll make her give an account of herself."

The affrighted Arabella was now brought forward.

"Who are you, slut?" continued Sir John ;
"and how came you into Master Edward Wilford's lodgings? Take off that muffler, that hood, and let us see your face. Do it

this moment, or I will set the Catchpole about you."

"It shall not need," replied Arabella, in a low voice; "I have done nothing for which I need blush, when the motive of my conduct is explained. But I disclaim your authority, Sir John Baker, whilst Sir Richard Southwell is here present. If he commands me to discover who I am, I will do it. I make my appeal to him."

"Satisfy the magistrate, I beseech you, young woman," said Sir Richard; "let him see your face."

"Sir Richard Southwell commands it, and I obey my father," said Arabella, as she threw back her hood and cloak; "and now, I do beseech you, however circumstances may seem to condemn me, that you, my dearest father, will not condemn me unheard."

Sir Richard was overpowered by his astonishment, and he could only exclaim, "Holy Virgin! my daughter!"

“The Lady Arabella!” cried Sir Francis Morgan; “then all my worst fears are true.”

“Here’s a goodly business, indeed!” said Sir John Baker. “Master Edward Wilford, I find, had good cause to resist the entrance of my officers into his lodgings, when he had secreted this worthy Knight’s daughter in them.”

“He is innocent,” said Arabella: “he had no knowledge of my being there, since I sought him by my own will.”

“Good God! what is this I hear!” exclaimed Sir Richard; “can it be my own child who has practised so much deception against me?”

“It is your own child, your guilty and deceitful child,” said Friar John, “and Edward Wilford is the man who has thus seduced her from her obedience to you. Sir Richard, I am sorry to be the means of communicating to you what must be so painful to the feelings of a father, but Sir Francis Morgan, by a train of extraordinary circumstances, discovered that Edward Wilford had this night formed a plan

to fly from Canterbury, and in company with your daughter."

"It is false," said Arabella,—“it is most false. Edward Wilford knew not that I was in his lodgings; and my purpose, in visiting Canterbury this night, was in a great measure to see, and to afford relief, to his unhappy sister, who is languishing in prison from the effects of a cruel torture. I can prove this, since I have brought with me the very means to afford her assistance."

"Your own account condemns you," said the Friar. "Had your purpose been only to visit the prison, the way to it did not lie by first seeking the dwelling of her brother."

"What purpose could take you there," said Sir Richard,—“to a place so unworthy yourself and your character?"

"My purpose," replied Arabella, "was to warn him of danger."

"What danger?—what warning?" cried Sir Richard;—"I beseech you, tell me truth."

“ I have told it already, my father,” answered Arabella ; “ and, would you know more, I would implore you to hear me in private, since some things I must relate, it might be dangerous to mention before such as I know are here.”

“ No !” replied Southwell ; “ you have been publicly accused, and you shall be as publicly vindicated or condemned. The cause now is not between father and daughter, but a matter of common justice ; since the transactions I have recently discovered at Dover render it necessary that every person connected with Edward Wilford should be known in their true light. Once more, I solemnly conjure you to declare plainly—did he expect you,—did he know of your being secreted in his lodgings ?”

“ He did not !” said Arabella. “ Send for him hither. He will vindicate my fame.”

“ Let Edward Wilford be brought hither,” said Sir Richard.

“ He is but in the next chamber,” replied

the Justice.—“ Catchpole Miller ! bring hither the prisoner.”

The catchpole left the room, in order to obey this order. Sir Richard Southwell looked upon his daughter, and exclaimed, “ Oh ! Arabella ! have I lived to see this hour,—to see the child that I have loved with so much affection thus shamed in the face of all the world ? And could you thus forget all my tenderness and care of you, thus to render broken-hearted a fond and foolish father, even in his old age ? Your deceit hurts me more than all. I could not have believed it. I thought you good and innocent, incapable of falsehood.”

“ Here comes the man,” said the Friar, “ who has robbed you of the duty of your child.”

Edward Wilford was brought into the chamber. On seeing Arabella, he uttered an involuntary exclamation of surprise ; and then, as if recollecting himself, he bowed slightly to Sir John Baker, and with cold formality to Sir

Richard Southwell, and darted a fierce glance expressive of angry feeling upon Morgan, whilst the flush of resentment overspread his cheek.

For a moment no one spoke, till Edward asked for what purpose he was called in before the civil magistrates. "For one that you shall hear of anon," said Sir John Baker. "But you must first answer some questions that will be put to you by my brother magistrate, Sir Richard Southwell, in respect to his daughter."

"I would ask you, young man," said Sir Richard, with the utmost severity of manner and countenance, "and for your own sake, I would ask you, to make a frank avowal,—what do you know of this unhappy woman, who, I grieve to think, is my daughter, and who, I understand, was found to be secreted in a mysterious manner in your lodgings? You resisted the entrance of the officers of justice, and I must think on that account."

"I was wholly ignorant," said Edward, "that your daughter, the Lady Arabella, was

in my apartment, as she herself can tell you. This is no crime. And let me ask you, Sir Richard, by what authority you would interrogate me? We are in England; and God forbid that the Spanish Inquisition should be set on foot on English ground!"

"I have full authority to deal with you," replied Sir Richard, "as I shall presently make it appear. But if not for your own, I would conjure you, for this woman's sake, to declare plainly what you know of her extraordinary conduct this night. You must have been acquainted with the place of her concealment?"

"Then, for her sake," said Edward Wilford, "I will again answer you, that the innocent may not suffer for one so unfortunate as I am,—I know nothing of the matter."

"Come, come," said Friar John; "here I must interfere. This will not do. I suppose you know nothing of your interview with the Lady Arabella in my church this morning?"

"And I conclude," added Morgan, "that

you were ignorant of having secured horses to bear her away from Canterbury this night, during the expected absence of her father?"

"And I suppose," continued the Friar, "you will declare yourself ignorant of the plot that has been carried on between the French, the Protestant exiles in Germany, and the discontented Reformers in England, once more to raise rebellion, and to assist the French to land upon our Kentish coasts, as they lately did in Yorkshire?"

"I am, indeed, ignorant of what you accuse me," said Wilford, as he looked with unfeigned astonishment mingled with indignation upon the parties, who followed up their accusations, the one so quick upon the other, that he could not possibly reply to them.

Nothing could be more irregular or unjust than this mode of procedure against Edward. But Sir John Baker allowed it without interruption, since he knew well how acceptable would be any disgrace that might befall the

family of Wilford to the higher powers.* He did not, therefore, feel the least desire to prevent the present attempt to ruin the son of so noted a heretic; and the injured feelings of Sir Richard Southwell (who believed Edward designed to rob him of his daughter) availed, in spite of himself, to prejudice him against this unhappy young man.

Edward persisted in disclaiming all knowledge of Arabella being in his lodgings, and of the other charges so suddenly and violently brought against him. Whilst he was doing so, Sir Richard started from his seat, and ex-

* The Privy Council, being informed that certain Justices of the Peace were disposed to be indulgent to the Protestants, so far interfered, that they sent them instructions to act in future more in conformity with the intentions of the Court; and enjoined that Justices of the Peace should *have spies in every parish*, for giving information of all persons who were of the Reformed Faith.—See Burnet and Strype.

Rapin, in speaking of this, says, “It was so like an Inquisition, that it was imputed to the counsels of the Spaniards, which rendered them extremely odious.”

claimed with more passion than judgment, “Your word, I fear, is wholly unworthy of credit; I can prove some things brought against you that you have denied: how, then, can I trust you in the matter that relates to my child? I fear you have practised upon her mind, to corrupt her truth, as you have her obedience.”

“She is innocent,—so help me, Heaven!” exclaimed Wilford; “she is entirely innocent:—for myself, I say nothing; since, I am convinced, all these accusations, some of which bear the colour of truth solely by a perversion of truth, are framed, and will be supported, to destroy me. I am here, defenceless and in your power; and I have no means to rebut the shafts of villany, where prejudice and passion are already prepared to receive whatever may be asserted as truth.”

“If you mean that to me, young man,” said Sir Richard, “you are in error; for though I cannot doubt, by the circumstances now brought before me, that you have tam-

pered with the mind of this unhappy woman, to make her forget what is due to her own character and to me as her father; though you designed this very night to steal her from me; yet, even to you I would give every opportunity to vindicate yourself, if it were possible, from the many charges brought against you,—but facts you cannot deny. I am in the Commission, as well as Sir John Baker, and, with his leave, I will examine you myself.”

“It will be useless, wholly useless,” replied Edward; “since, I am convinced, this is a conspiracy, made on purpose to entrap me, and to deceive you, Sir Richard.”

“That cannot be,” said Southwell; “since I examined, myself, certain suspected persons at Dover, and found upon them many letters, concerting a sudden rising with the discontented party in England; and you were expressly named in those letters, for having left Frankfort to obtain supplies for the Protestants from certain merchants in London, with Master

Bowyer at their head ; and your delay in bringing these supplies was complained of, as it was stated nothing could be done till you did bring them. What have you to answer to this charge ?”

“ I answer,” said Wilford, “ by saying, that I did come into England to obtain such supplies to assist the exiled Protestants at Frankfort, for they were in great necessity. But if any of those Protestants meditated a league with France, to stir up the discontented to rebellion in England,—to *that* point, I answer, I am wholly innocent ; and my delay to procure such supplies was occasioned by finding, on my arrival, that my father was a prisoner on a cruel charge.”

“ This is plausible,” said Sir Richard, “ and would pass current but for one circumstance. Master Bowyer is a prisoner in the Marshalsea, by order of the Council, on suspicion ; therefore, you *could* not obtain the supplies. And the simple fact, which you admit, that you came

into England expressly to obtain them for a Protestant party, now discovered to be in league with France, is a circumstance *alone* sufficient to convict you. In this you will allow there can be no conspiracy against you."

"And if there needed more evidence to prove your treasonable practices," said the Friar, "I would only ask you, if you know your own handwriting.—Sir Francis Morgan, be pleased to produce the papers."

Morgan obeyed; and as he tendered them to Sir Richard Southwell, he said, "There, Sir Richard, are copies of letters written by this young man to the late Sir Thomas Wyatt, who was executed for rebellion. They will show what was Edward Wilford's disposition towards Queen Mary at that time; a strong presumptive evidence that the man who could once allow himself to be intreated to join rebellion, would not now hesitate to join these exiles against England."

"It is a natural inference," said Sir Richard,

“though I cannot admit it as proof. How do you answer this charge respecting the letters?”

“Read them,” replied Edward Wilford; “they will speak for themselves. All I should say would be useless, since, I see, you are determined to think me guilty.”

“Good God!” exclaimed Sir Richard, “the first expression is sufficient to convict you. Here you call the Queen a blood-thirsty bigot! and the Church of Rome the Antichrist of the Prophet!”

“High-treason!” cried Sir John Baker,—“high-treason as ever was uttered, and comes immediately under the letter of the Proclamation.”

“And here you say,” continued Sir Richard, “that the sentence executed on the Lady Jane Dudley and her husband was cruel and murderous; that Jane ought to have been acquitted, since she could not, in justice, be held guilty of usurpation, inasmuch as Edward the Sixth, by his last will, named her his successor to the crown.”

“Downright treason!” cried Sir John.

“And again,” said Southwell, “you write that Bonner is no better than a tiger,—an inhuman wretch, worse than a savage.”

“Positive blasphemy!” cried Sir John Baker; “what, to call my Right Reverend Friend a savage!—Oh, thou shameless varlet! thou filthy Lutheran!—thou—thou shalt suffer for this.”

“And you protest in this letter,” continued Southwell, “that if the life of the Princess Elizabeth is really in danger from the machinations of Gardiner and the Queen, you *will* take up arms, and spend the last drop of your blood in her defence.”

“Open rebellion!” cried Sir John Baker. “You will have a sharp account to settle for this, young man; that I promise you.—Clerk, make out his committal.”

“Stay a while,” said Sir Richard, “we have discovered much, and may discover more. But whatever is done, it shall be done justly. My private wrongs shall not interfere to the injury of this accused man.—Sir Francis Morgan,

there is one point on which I must demand an explanation of *you*. If you have, as it appears, for some time possessed these papers, proving the traitorous connexion of your guilty kinsman with Sir Thomas Wyatt, why have you thus long concealed the matter, and why is it brought forward now?"

"I confess my error," said Morgan; "and that I wished at one time to have suppressed them, in the hope to save Edward."

"It is false! most false!" exclaimed Arabella: "here I can convict you. I beseech you, Sir," she continued, turning to her father, "however much circumstances yet unexplained may induce you to condemn me, that you will hear me speak. I can show Sir Francis Morgan in his true character; I can prove him a villain. Those papers he held back, on purpose to use them as the means to act upon my mind, to draw me into a compliance with his arbitrary claim upon my hand.—Dare you, Sir Francis, deny the truth? Did you not do so?"

“ Yes, I did so, indeed,” replied Morgan : “ and since *you*, Lady Arabella, force me to be explicit, the truth must be spoken ; though, for your sake, I would gladly have concealed it. I will confess the whole matter of this day’s transactions to your father.”

“ What, have you, too, seen my daughter before now, to-day ?” cried Sir Richard ; “ this is most extraordinary ; since it was her own request, that you, Sir Francis, should be denied all access to her during my absence ; and she promised also, (I grieve to think she could so abuse the kindness of a father,) that if I would but grant her liberty to be the mistress of her own actions during my absence, she would hold no intercourse with any one till my return.”

“ I did ! I did !” said Arabella ; and she burst into tears as she spoke ; “ but you do not know, you have not heard the cruel circumstances by which I have been induced to break my promise.”

“ No circumstances could have occurred to

induce you, Lady," said Friar John, "to break that promise, had you not voluntarily made use of the liberty that was allowed you by your father, to seek his greatest enemy; to hold a meeting with that criminal who stands before us. And you deceived me too; since you told me but yesterday, that you should not quit your chamber till your father's return. Yet, a few hours after, you are detected holding a meeting with Edward Wilford, even before the very tomb that contains the ashes of your mother. Respect for her memory should, at least, have taught you to consider as sacred that spot, and not to make it, as you have done, the scene of disobedience to your father."

"Did my daughter do this?" exclaimed Sir Richard; "could she have the heart to do it?—Oh! Arabella, do not turn to me. I cannot, I will not hear you. You shall not add falsehood to sin, deception to deception. I loved you dearer than my life; and rather than find that you could thus betray yourself and me to

dishonour, I would have seen you dead.—And you, young man, who have so seduced my child from her obedience, what will you answer ?”

“ That she is innocent ! that I am innocent !” replied Wilford.

“ Do you deny, then,” said Friar John, “ that you held a meeting with her in Wellminster Church ?”

“ I am not bound to answer *you*,” replied Edward haughtily.

“ Perhaps,” said Morgan, “ in pity to the feelings of this unhappy lady, we had better not proceed in this business in public. I would rather rest under the imputation she is disposed to charge upon me, than defend myself, by exposing what, for her sake, I would wish to conceal.”

“ You are a villain !” exclaimed Edward Wilford.

“ Silence !” said Southwell.

“ Do not spare me, Sir Francis,” cried Arabella ; “ tell all you know ; tell to the world at

large, the base, the unmanly means you took but this day to act upon my feelings, to win me to your purpose. You have cast aspersions upon me in public; you have accused your kinsman; and in public you shall prove these things."

"You shall, indeed," said Sir Richard: "I would gladly, could I have prevented my daughter's shame, have given my life to do it; but it shall never be said, that for any private motive, even to screen the reputation of my own child, I threw an obstacle in the way of justice. This young man has been accused in public; and every charge so brought against him shall be openly proved in the face of all the world."

"You are generous, Sir Richard," said Edward, "but you are deceived; and your very generosity of temper is made an instrument to assist the villany of others."

"Railing is no proof," observed Sir Richard; and, turning to his daughter, he added, "You

admit, that you met Edward Wilford this day in the Church of Wellminster."

"Yes!" replied Arabella. "But, as God shall witness, not for the purpose Sir Francis Morgan would insinuate. I am innocent in this. Call upon Edward; he will acquit me."

"To be sure he will," said the Friar. "We have never yet suspected him of so much baseness to suppose that he would seduce you from the obedience you owe to your father, and then seek to cast the blame on you. He would not do so."

"Insidious man!" exclaimed Wilford; "you would destroy the only means that remains to me to clear this unhappy lady in the sight of her father and of the world.—Sir Richard! your daughter is guiltless! I wrote the letter that wrought upon her mind to induce her to meet me in the Church, and for a cause of common humanity;—to intreat her, that she would implore you to show some mercy to my poor sister, who is now lingering under the effects of

a most cruel torture in a common prison. This was the cause. Sir Francis has told you much ; but this part of the tale he has purposely suppressed."

" But he has not," said the Friar, " since he told it to *me*, who had the power to afford some relief to your sister. She is in prison under a charge of obstinate heresy. Had you only desired to find relief for her, it would have been to *me*, not to the Lady Arabella, you would have addressed yourself. But, you know, there was another motive."

" Yes !" replied Edward, " there was another motive. I wished to see her before I parted from her, perhaps for ever. I wished to gain from her a solemn promise, that were I living or dead, she would never cast herself away upon such a wretch as Morgan. This is truth."

" And it is enough," said Sir Richard,—
" enough to prove all that has been deposed against you. And I do believe, that you did meditate to have stolen from me my child ;

else why, after such a meeting, if it were merely designed for the purpose you have stated,—why should Arabella be found in your lodgings? You cannot answer this.”

“I cannot, indeed,” said Edward; “since her being there is a circumstance quite as surprising to me as it can be to yourself. But my knowledge of your daughter’s character and worth assures me that, however extraordinary it may appear, no improper motive could be the cause.”

“I can prove it,” said Arabella; “and, by doing so, I must convict Morgan of villany of the deepest dye.”

“Forbear that point, Lady Arabella,” said Sir Francis, “or you may prove *yourself* a participator in the public crimes of which this man is accused.—Sir Richard! to save your daughter’s honour, nay, I will add, perhaps to save her life, I intercepted her in her flight to join Edward Wilford at Canterbury. I conjured her to be mine, lest she should fall under

the double shame—that of stealing away from you, and in company with a *traitor*. I did more : I begged her, for her own sake, to consent to receive me, as you willed she should do, as her future husband ; and, governed by my unbounded affection for her,—call it a weakness if you will,—I confess, I offered even to spare the guilty for her sake, so she would but consent. I showed her the treasonable letters of this man ; I offered to destroy them, so that I might but be assured she would not plunge herself into ruin, and cover your age with shame by becoming the wife of such a man. I did all that love, pity, and even a feeling of mercy for my guilty kinsman could suggest to me, to save both him and her ; but in vain. She left me, threatening to make this act of kindness to herself and Edward Wilford my ruin with you.”

“ Good Heaven !” exclaimed Arabella, “ can falsehood thus be turned to bear the face of truth ?”

“ There is no falsehood ; all is truth,” said

the Friar. “Morgan instantly sought me; he told me all. But when I heard that some matters had come forward in the examination of the persons suspected at Dover, to implicate Edward Wilford in this new scheme of rebellion with the Protestants; I, yes, *I* then insisted that Sir Francis should no longer conceal letters that would prove Edward’s former guilt. I left Morgan to take the host to a sick canon of the Cathedral. On my return with it, this old man insulted me in the streets, in his haste to aid Wilford in his flight; and even his own confession helps to prove all the charges brought against his master.—Bring that old man forward. Now let him speak.”

Abel Allen was accordingly produced.

“What have you to say, old man,” inquired Sir Richard, “for the offence committed by you this evening?”

“I answer,” said Abel, “that I committed no offence at all; for, saving your Worship’s presence, it was Pincher that did it, and not I.”

“Who is Pincher?” inquired Sir Richard ;
“is he now present?”

“No, please your Worship,” replied Abel Allen ; “Pincher is too well-bred to come uncalled before his betters. And if it likes your Worship, he is my dog, and as trusty and as sensible a cur as ever wagged a tail ; though, I grant, Pincher made a great mistake this evening, for I never bid him run off with the top of the broken pyx. But as for where Pincher may be, I can’t take upon me to say, seeing that he has not sent me word ; and I really don’t know all his haunts, though they mostly lie in the shambles, or among the vintners’ boys. But if I did know them, I should be loth to give an account of them ; for I am not the man to bring an old friend into trouble, and most specially as, in doing the offence, he thought he did no wrong.”

“And what have you to say for yourself,” said the Friar, “for this excuse affects only your dog?”

“Marry, an’ it like you,” replied Allen, “I would say for myself, what all men should say of another—the truth. I was in a great hurry, a-going to do Master Edward’s bidding.”

“And what was that?” inquired Sir Richard.

“Why, I went to get the horses ordered, that Master Edward was desirous to have in readiness, to set off on his journey, as soon as the friend he expected to go with him should arrive at his lodgings.”

“You observe that, Sir Richard?” said Morgan.

“I do,” replied Sir Richard: “and how many horses were you ordered to procure? and who was the friend your master expected to accompany him on this journey?”

“The horses were two in number,” answered Allen; “but as to who the friend might be, I know no more than your Worship; for Master Edward did not tell me, so I can’t say if it was man, woman, or child.”

“How do all things prove the truth!” said

Sir Richard ; “even this man’s own servant is the unconscious means to convict him.— Edward Wilford, tell us who was that friend, who was to become the companion of your journey.”

“One,” replied Edward, “who was a true friend, since he would have been such to me in my need. He would have risked even his own personal safety to serve me. And I cannot, and will not return such kindness, such generous intentions, by naming him in the presence of men so dangerous as are some here present.”

Sir Richard looked dissatisfied, and shook his head.

“I fear,” said Sir Francis Morgan, “that your friend is one from the land of Utopia, and that you *cannot* name him.”

“And what is to be done with this old rascal?” inquired Sir John Baker, “and his heretic dog?”

“As for me,” said Abel, “I protest that I

am as innocent of offence to the Friar and the pyx, as the babe that is unborn. I was going back to Master Edward's lodgings, after I had ordered the horses for his journey, when, look you, I turned down an alley, that brought me out suddenly just upon that part of the street where the Friar was going along, carrying the pyx under a canopy; and so, I had no time to think what I was doing; and I dashed under the canopy, meaning no offence, either to the Friar or to his box; and so I upset it, and it broke as it fell; and Pincher, not understanding what the shout meant, that was set up by the Friar and his people, did run off with the top of the broken pyx. For though Pincher is as faithful and as honest a dog as ever walked upon four legs, yet he is something given, now and then, to pilfering; that even I must say of him. And so I hope you will not deal hard with me, nor with Pincher neither; and if one of us must go to prison, why I am ready, for I would be loth to see the poor dog hanged by the neck

like a cut-purse ; for I'll take upon me to say, he meant no disrespect, and didn't know what he was doing ; for had the Pope himself been there, instead of the Friar, it had been all one to Pincher."

" It is a gross offence," said Sir John Baker ; " an insult to the Holy Office. The thing must be farther considered ; and till it is so, you must remain in ward.—Clerk, make out that old rascal's committal. Here will be a pretty posse for the gaol to-night.—Master Edward Wilford stands committed for high treason."

" On what ground of accusation am I to make out the committal?" inquired Cluny : " on the charge of the late discoveries at Dover ; or on the former one, respecting the the letters to Sir Thomas Wyatt?"

" On both, on both grounds," replied Sir John ; " then, Clerk, you are sure to be right."

" And the principal evidence will be the

letters, the testimony of Sir Francis Morgan, and that of the person or persons apprehended at Dover?" said Cluny.

"It will be painful to me," said Morgan, "to appear against so near a kinsman, especially as we stand connected in regard to certain properties. But I must not, from any private motive, shrink from a call of duty. The offence is of Wilford's own seeking; and, whatever may be the consequence, his blood be upon his own head."

"No, his blood be upon thy head, Morgan," exclaimed old Gammer Plaise, as her voice, in a loud and emphatic manner, burst at once upon the ears of all assembled; "you will rise up and slay to glut your avarice.—I know you, Morgan,—Edward Wilford stands between you and the broad lands and golden pieces of your uncle. I see all your drift and all your craft.—Sir Richard Southwell, look to your own safety; you have an only child; do not give her to a villain, lest he thirst for

your blood too, to clutch a second inheritance. Do not open the door of the fold, lest the wolf bear away your little ewe-lamb.—Morgan, bethink you of the parable; and when you cry with the wicked servants, “This is the heir, come, let us rise up and kill him,” bethink you also of the *Lord* of that vineyard, who *will* avenge Him, who will cast you, and your wicked fellows into outer darkness.”

“Silence that old woman, Cluny,” said Sir John Baker; “and have her and the blind bastard off to the gaol at once; and let the old dog be taken along with them.”

“That’s me, I am sure,” said Abel Allen; “for dogs, when they get old, are kicked out at any rogue’s pleasure; though there be dogs honester, ay, and wiser too, than many a Justice of the Peace, which somehow, I think, is a queer name for an office that now-a-days seems to be set up on purpose to pick a quarrel upon every trifle with an honest man.—God bless you, dear Master Wilford; it is a great

comfort to me, as I am going to prison, to know that your honour is going there too: and I will love, and be faithful to you to the last, for all these bad men would try to make me tell against you; and, saving their Worships' presence, there is one thing I would like to say to Sir Richard Southwell, before I depart."

"What is it?—speak," said Sir Richard; "I will attend to you."

"It is only just this piece of advice," replied old Abel, "that, if I were you, Sir Richard, I would be like my dog Pincher,—saving your Worship's presence for the comparison; and I would let no man lead me by the nose, be he a dicing young Knight, or a Spanish Friar;—and so I wish you a good even, and much comfort in yon poor damsel, your daughter."

Abel Allen finished his speech, and was fairly pushed out of the room by the catch-pole who had him in arrest. Gammer Plaise

and Tommy were next to follow; when the former, as she drew near the door, suddenly turned round, and fixing her eye upon Sir Richard Southwell, she said, "I pity you, Sir Richard: had you a better faith, you would be a wiser and a better man; but now you are a deceived and a besotted one. You are walking in a dream, from which you will presently awake, when you stand upon the very brink of a fearful gulph that lies before you. Look to it, while it is yet time, and be not as Jephthah was of old, the man to sacrifice your daughter."

"Don't talk so, granny," cried Tommy; "you'll only make the people worse to you. Whereabouts is Sir Richard Southwell,—where does he stand?"

"Here, boy," answered Sir Richard; "I grieve to see one so young, and so afflicted as you are, in your sad case."

Tommy stretched out his hand, felt about him a moment, and then dropped on his knees before Sir Richard Southwell, caught him by

the hand, and raised towards him his innocent but sightless face, as he said, "Don't grieve for me, Sir Richard,—I am quite content : but do feel for granny, do be good to granny, for she is very old, and poor, and miserable ; and when folks are unhappy, like granny, one ought not to take note of all the hard words they may say ; and you may say cross things yourself, Sir Richard, if you should ever have your child burnt, as granny had my dear father."

Sir Richard felt the boy's appeal, and kindly wrung him by the hand, as he said, "Be of good cheer, child ; I hope your granny will not be obstinate, but see her errors for your sake."

"So that poor old granny was safe," continued Tommy ; "and was but out of prison, I could whistle, and make baskets, and be as happy as the day was long : but do, Sir Richard,—if you have the heart of a Christian man, do see what you can do for poor granny ;

for, though she has odd ways, she is as kind a soul as ever breathed :” and Tommy sobbed as he spoke, and added, “ If you do burn her, the day will come, when God shall make you sorry for it, though you were as great as King Solomon in all his glory.”

These prisoners were carried off; and only Edward Wilford now remaining to follow, Sir Richard thus addressed him. “ However deeply, young man, I may feel the wrongs you have inflicted upon me, by poisoning the mind of my once innocent child, I could bury my own wrongs in oblivion for the sake of your father, who was once most dear to me; but my allegiance to my Queen will not suffer me to pass in silence the charges brought against you by these discoveries at Dover. You admit, that your purpose for returning to England was to obtain supplies for the exiled Protestants at Frankfort. And as many, very many of those Protestants are detected to be in league with France, to stir up sedition

amongst the disaffected in this country, your conduct must be looked to. You shall have justice; facts shall be examined before you take your trial: then, if you can exculpate yourself, I say, may God deliver you; but, till then, my duty will oblige me to see that you are held a prisoner in Canterbury Castle: you must be instantly removed thither."

"I am guiltless," replied Edward, "of holding any treasonable purpose in once more revisiting my native land. But I know *who* are my enemies, and what they will do to make truth seem as falsehood, and falsehood as truth. I am prepared to meet my fate, since I know the worst. And who was ever yet spared when it became necessary for the interests of Sir Francis Morgan, and Friar John de Villa Garcina, that they should be destroyed?—Farewell, Arabella!—Remember, for your *own* sake, the solemn promise you plighted to me but this morning, as we both stood before the tomb of your mother, whilst God saw our

intentions,—and her spirit, perhaps, looked down with pity upon us.”

“ Oh ! my father,” said Arabella, “ he is innocent ; indeed, he is ! I beseech you,” and she threw herself on her knees before him, and caught her father’s hand,—“ I beseech you to spare Edward Wilford ;—Morgan is a villain.”

“ I cannot hear you,” replied Sir Richard ; “ your conduct has lost all claim upon my confidence ; and after such conduct, I must think your lips as false as your heart. Rise, Arabella ; I command you, rise.—Sir John Baker, I shall thank you to see to the removal of the prisoner.”

“ I go,” said Edward Wilford ; “ I will not stay to incense you, by my presence, against your unhappy daughter. I ask nothing for myself ; but, ere I go, there is one thing that I must ask, even of you, Sir Richard. It is, to show some pity to my poor sister. Rose has been inhumanly tortured. Harpsfield has, like a savage and a monster as he is, burnt and

maimed her in the hand. In this state she has been cast into a prison; and, unless you interpose by your authority to save her, she will perish from neglect, since her condition demands instant aid."

Sir Richard appeared greatly shocked; for, like Cardinal Pole, though a zealous Roman Catholic, he was a sincere contemner of making converts by cruelty; and it was said, that this mildness of spirit had something lessened him in the favour of Mary. Still, he would not openly declare his sentiments, lest they should be mistaken for favouring the doctrine of the Reformation. He did not, therefore, make any comment upon the cruelty practised upon Rose; but he assured her brother, that he would himself undertake to find her all the relief that might be necessary, and would endeavour to mitigate the severity of her fate.

"I thank you for this kindness to my poor Rose," said Wilford; "may God reward you for it; and, greatly softened by the thoughts of

his innocent and suffering sister, a tear stole down the manly cheek of Edward as he spoke her name ; and he continued : “ May God preserve you, Arabella ; and you, Sir Richard,—may he prevent you from rushing upon the misery you meditate, in giving your daughter to one so wholly unworthy of her.—And for you, Sir Francis Morgan,” he added, as he looked sternly upon his kinsman, “ should I escape bonds and death, it shall be to do an act of justice upon you. You are eager to bathe your hands in my blood ; but you are a wretch that I can despise even more than I can hate.”

Wilford was carried off to Canterbury Castle, leaving Arabella almost fainting in her father’s arms ; and so great was the tumult and anxiety of her mind, that she was incapable of even attempting to remove those prejudices he had adopted against her. Sir Richard now gave his daughter into the care of Friar John, requesting him to see her conveyed home in safety to Wellminster Hall ; as he said that he

had himself some business to transact in Canterbury, which must be done ere that night was passed.

In a short time, Young Wilford, Gammer Plaise, blind Tommy, and Abel Allen, were all safely deposited in the public gaol of Canterbury, where for the present we must leave them.

A letter written by old Abel, two or three days after his imprisonment, and addressed to his sister, Widow Littlewit, is still in existence, and it is a very curious specimen of epistolary composition. The original autograph of this honest serving-man is now in the possession of an ingenious antiquary, who has favoured us with a literal copy of it; having, for our benefit, (and we hope also for that of the reader,) given it with the modern spelling, since the original orthography of old Abel, Mr. — declared, had puzzled him more than any monkish chronicle, charter, or document he had ever yet deciphered. The following is a copy of this

curious epistle, in which it will be seen, that, according to the manner of his time, (adopted even by the learned and pious Bishop Hooper,) old Abel Allen mixed up his ideas of religion, and the interference of a Divine Providence, with the most *common* and *familiar* incidents of human life. To us it may seem extraordinary; but as it was the general practice of the time, with the good and the innocent, it must have proceeded from a sincere, though mistaken, desire to do honour to God in whatsoever they did, in all seasons, and on all occasions.

“ Good Sister Littlewit,

“ It hath pleased the Lord that I should suffer, and be laid up in durance for mine offence, which was none of mine neither, inasmuch as Pincher had the greater hand in it. Nevertheless, I am well content therein, and exceedingly joyful that the poor dumb thing has got clear off from being hurt for the same : for certain Sir John Baker would have committed him by a warrant, could he have laid hands upon him; for, as people say that Sir John never spares man, woman, or child, how should a dog look to find mercy from him? I am laid up, good Sister, in a cold, damp, old, ancient hole

under ground, that they call a dungeon, all of stone, with a slit in the wall for a window, with nothing but straw to rest my limbs upon. Pincher used to have a better bed than I have now, but what of that? mayhap he more deserved it. I have given my last groat to get a bit of paper, and a drop of ink to indite these to you, to bid you be of good cheer, and not to make your moan for me; for I see what the Lord is looking for,—He would try me: and though the first day I came here I felt my heart very lumpish, and sad within me, and flesh and blood did strive hard against the spirit, yet, thanks be to God, I am better now! And both day and night I am as joyful as though I were under no cross at all. Yea, and I am as merry as I hope you will be in Heaven, if ever you get there. And this morning, being taken up into fresh air in the court-yard of the gaol, I cut a frisk or twaine as jollily as ever I did in all my days. So, good Sister, don't desert the truth, if the Lord should be for putting you on your trial. Don't recant, and turn to the Pope and the Devil, but cast all your care upon God—He will help the widow—He will look to your fatherless babe—He will preserve your goods—He will see that your lodgers pay their dues—He will keep the house; yea, rather than fail you, or it should lie undone, He will sweep the house, and rock the babe in its cradle. Cast, therefore, I say, all your care upon Him, for He will never forsake you so long as you don't forsake Him. Pray send me my red worsted night-cap, and the old townsman's gown that Master Wilford gave me,

for I lack both in this cold damp dungeon. And if Pincher comes home, do keep him close shut up, for fear of Justice Baker. You had better keep him in the cellar, as the surest place.

“ God bless you, good Sister Littlewit,

“ (Kiss Poppet for Mickey,)

“ So prays your loving brother,

“ ABEL ALLEN.

“ Don’t forget to remember not to bung up the little barrel of ale that I brewed for you ’gainst Christmas ; for if you do afore it has done working, it will burst the barrel by *fumigation*.

“ These from my doleful prison in Canterbury Castle, this 1st day of November.—Amen.”

END OF THE SECOND VOLUME.

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